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Summary of Contents

This thesis has examined a phenomenon that is unusual in cinema – the use of a character’s unconscious as a motivating factor for action and narrative progression. The three directors chosen for this project; Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski have consistently explored both the representation of a character’s unconscious on film and the narrative possibilities that arise as a result of that representation. This thesis has also explored the use of a character’s unconscious in the dream films of early cinema and in the psycho-killer genre. The psycho-killer genre remains robust and popular. It is the dominant genre where the unconscious of the protagonist is portrayed and works as a motivation for character action, usually murderous action. The strength of this genre leaves little openings for films which depict the unconscious of a character that does not have murderous intentions. In contrast the films in this thesis reference an unconscious that might be more familiar to the average film spectator. This thesis has also explored texts from Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan that are not frequently used in the discipline of film studies and has fruitfully applied these theories to the question of unconscious character motivation in film. The analysis of particular events in the lives of these three directors – Buñuel’s involvement with the Surrealist movement, Hitchcock’s move to America at the height of the popularisation of psychoanalysis in that country and Kieślowski’s involvement with the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement – explores new approaches to examining the life of the director in connection to the films made. This thesis shows that the period of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement coincided with a period of great experimentation by Kieślowski with regards to developing techniques to represent “the inner life.” Furthermore this thesis shows that the techniques he experimented with during this period were later refined and developed and were the basis of the methods used to represent the unconscious of a character in the *Three Colours: Trilogy*. The final two chapters analyse techniques for representing the unconscious of a character on film and the repercussions of that representation on narrative structure.

The Representation and Narrative Function of a Character's Unconscious in the
Films of Luis Buñuel, Alfred Hitchcock and Krzysztof Kieślowski

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Introduction

Alfred Hitchcock's 1945 film *Spellbound* contains a famous sequence whereby John Ballantyne (Gregory Peck) recounts his dream to two psychoanalysts; Dr. Constance Peterson (Ingrid Bergman) and Dr. Alex Brulov (Michael Chekhov). The scene is set up as a session between psychoanalyst(s) and client. The purpose of the retelling is to allow the psychoanalysts to decipher the images contained in the dream in order to uncover the reasons behind Ballantyne's erratic behaviour. As Ballantyne retells his dream both analysts offer interpretations for the events he recalls and when he finishes they come to a conclusion regarding the most dramatic sequence in the dream and surmise that the sequence of images in the dream indicate a forgotten traumatic event.

The dream sequence itself, designed by Salvador Dalí, presents Ballantyne's unconscious. In it we see coded references to his desire for Dr. Peterson as well as an oblique presentation of a childhood trauma that has resurfaced as a result of his witnessing a murder. That is to say the dream presents the unacknowledged desires, wishes, and fears of Ballantyne as well as recalling a repressed childhood trauma. The representation of the unconscious of this character occurs only once in this film and the images of the unconscious are immediately deciphered. The aim of this representation is clear; it is to aid the Hitchcock detective couple, Dr. Peterson and Ballantyne in their solving of the mystery whilst falling in love. The scene in which Ballantyne's unconscious is portrayed is the start of the unravelling of the mystery as to the character's unusual behaviour: by representing Ballantyne's unconscious on screen his previous actions are now given the motivation that they had earlier lacked. Thus this scene both offers a representation of the character's unconscious and introduces a type of narrative motivation that the audience was previously unaware of. Whilst *Spellbound* offers a relatively straightforward representation of Ballantyne's unconscious and makes basic links between the subject matter of his unconscious and his actions throughout this film, there are other films, including other Hitchcock films, which offer a more complex representation of a character's unconscious whereby this representation is more subtly connected to the underlying motivation for character action and narrative progression.

This thesis examines a series of films by Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski in which there is a detailed representation of the unconscious of a character whereby that representation contributes strongly to the narrative development of these films. It focuses mainly on the films of Krzysztof Kieślowski, in particular his films from *Camera Buff* (1979) onwards. This is a period in his career when he began to make fiction films almost exclusively; prior to that he had been predominately a documentary film maker. With the move to fiction films Kieślowski began to attempt to depict what he called “the inner life” of his protagonists on screen. This thesis argues that Kieślowski’s search to portray “the inner life” of characters in film gave rise to a series of films, beginning with *Camera Buff* which depicts the unconscious of a protagonist on screen. Kieślowski uses the term “inner life” frequently in interviews. His most comprehensive explanation of what the term means to him is in a conversation regarding *The Double Life of Véronique* (1991): “The realm of superstitions, fortune-telling, presentiments, intuition, dreams, all this is the inner life of a human being, and all this is the hardest thing to film.”¹ In other references he distinguishes between public life or physical reality and subjectivity, noting in reference to making *Blind Chance* (1981) that this film “is no longer a description of the outside world but rather of the inner world,”² and in an interview with Paul Coates a year before his death he states that “Dreams are the classic expression of inner life” and that “the inner life – unlike public life – is the only thing that interests me.”³ The aim of this thesis is to show the similarities and differences that occur in the method of representing a character’s unconscious on film and to illustrate how that representation influences the narrative progression of these films particularly in relation to causal motivation for character action. These three directors have been chosen as their work has frequently tried to represent the unconscious of a character on film. Buñuel began his career with a film about the unconscious: *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) and the majority of his subsequent films were thematically structured

¹ Stok, Danusia, ed. *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*. London: Faber and Faber, 1993. p. 194.

² Ibid. p. 113.

³ Coates, Paul, ed. *Lucid Dreams: The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski*. Wiltshire: Flick Books, 1999. pp. 161-2.

around issues of suppressed desire⁴, Hitchcock made a series of films which referred to the unconscious of the protagonist: *Spellbound* (1945), *Psycho* (1960) and *Marnie* (1964). In addition to this they are representative directors of major cinematic traditions: Avant-Garde, Classical Hollywood and European Art House.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter begins with a definition of the unconscious as depicted in the works of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. These psychoanalysts have been chosen as their work focuses on the structure and methods of operation of the unconscious. Both men also stress the importance of the inter-relationship between consciousness and the unconscious and their work traces the influence of the unconscious on conscious acts. A psychoanalytical understanding of the unconscious is necessary as this thesis examines a series of films whose protagonists' actions are based on both conscious and unconscious motivation. Unconscious motivation indicates a character that acts and responds to events without consciously knowing the reasons for these actions. In order to analyse the presentation of this type of motivation in film and to examine the type of film narrative it generates it is necessary to have a precise understanding of the term the unconscious. The second chapter considers two types of film which frequently depict the unconscious of a character: the dream films of early cinema and the psycho killer genre.⁵ Both types of films are examined in detail as their differing representation of the unconscious of a character contains elements which are reproduced in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski. Specifically, in the dream films of early cinema the unconscious of a character is presented as an equivalent to the character's conscious life, just as the conscious actions and behaviours of a character do not need an explanation, so too, in these films the unconscious life of a character provides its own justification. This method of representing the unconscious of a character as being as relevant to character formation as the conscious actions and behaviours of that character sets up an equality between depictions of consciousness and the unconscious that is echoed in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski. In the

⁴ See, for example, *Viridiana* (1961), *Belle de Jour* (1967), *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972) and *That Obscure Object of Desire* (1977)

⁵ William Indick describes this genre in *Psycho Thrillers: Cinematic Explorations of the Mysteries of the Mind*. London: McFarland and Co, 2006. It is also described by Andrew Tudor in *Monsters and Mad Scientists: a Cultural History of the Horror Movie*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

psycho killer genre a depiction of the unconscious of a character is usually withheld until the end of the film, whereby the unconscious is represented by reference to an earlier trauma which the protagonist has repressed. Typically, the revelation of this repressed trauma is used to explain the murderous actions of the psycho killer. In this genre the unconscious of the protagonist is represented only in order to give reasons for the preceding actions. This method of presenting the unconscious of a character can also be seen in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski. Along with the method of presenting the unconscious of a character directly to the audience without a preceding explanatory scene, these three directors also provide scenes and sequences towards the end of their films in which the previous actions of the character are explained by reference to their unconscious.

One of the reasons the films of these three directors have been chosen for this project is that they had a career long interest in representing the unconscious of a character on screen. The third chapter investigates the cultural and historical background of each director in order to explore the relationship between that background and the films they made. The influence of the Surrealist movement on Buñuel's filmmaking is well documented.⁶ His involvement with the Surrealist group in Paris encouraged his interest in the irrational and heightened his fascination with the unconscious. While he left the group shortly after making his second film *L'Age d'Or* (1931) the principles of this group remained influential throughout his career. Whilst the films of Alfred Hitchcock always portray the emotional reasons for character action and behaviour there is a sequence of work from this director in which the unconscious of a character becomes a motivating factor for action. The first of these films *Spellbound* (1945) was made shortly after Hitchcock's move to America at a time when the discipline of psychoanalysis was beginning to be popularised in that country. The influence of that period on Hitchcock's filmmaking will be analysed in this section. Krzysztof Kieślowski began his career as a documentary filmmaker. However, he was also interested in depicting what he called "the inner

⁶ See, for example: Aranda, J. Francisco. *Luis Buñuel: A Critical Biography*. Trans. David Robinson. London: Secker and Warburg, 1975. Baxter, John. *Buñuel*. New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998. Edwards, Gwynne. *A Companion to Luis Buñuel*. Suffolk: Tamesis, 2005.

life” of his characters. This thesis contends that it was during the late 1970s that these two apparently opposite tendencies came together in his Cinema of Moral Anxiety films in which he portrayed the realities of life in Poland at that time, whilst at the same time he began to film sequences which portrayed evidence of a character’s memory, dreams and desires, all aspects of the unconscious. The term Cinema of Moral Anxiety originated with the filmmaker Janusz Kijowski. It refers both to a group of films made in Poland between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s and the collective group of filmmakers who were responsible for bringing these films to fruition. A more detailed analysis of the movement forms part of chapter three.

Chapter four undertakes an analysis of the techniques used by each director to represent a protagonist’s unconscious on screen. It contends, that despite working in different film cultures – Avant-Garde, Classical Hollywood and European Art House – there are many similarities in the style and form used by these directors, some of which echo the methods of representation used in the dream films of early cinema and the psycho killer genre also. While this chapter looks at the form of such films the final chapter investigates the effect of that form on content. Specifically, chapter five examines the narrative structure of one film from each director: Buñuel’s *Un Chien Andalou* (1929), Hitchcock’s *Marnie* (1964) and Kieślowski’s *Three Colours: Blue* (1993) in order to investigate the effect of the use of the unconscious of a protagonist on causal motivation and narrative progression.

Literature Review

The adaptation of psychoanalytical theories by film studies

Despite the fact that both cinema and psychoanalysis developed at the beginning of the twentieth century the discipline of film studies has appropriated only certain elements of the work of Freud and Lacan into its analytical framework. Specifically the discipline of film studies has focused predominately on Freud’s Oedipus complex⁷ and Lacan’s Mirror Stage of human development⁸. Christian Metz⁹, Jean-

⁷ Freud, Sigmund. “Three Essays on Sexuality: Essay III The Transformations of Puberty.” *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. III. London: The Hogarth Press, 1953-1974 p. 226

Louis Baudry¹⁰ and Laura Mulvey¹¹ are the three film theorists whose work has been most influential in the area of psychoanalytical film studies. Baudry was the first to relate Lacan's Mirror stage of development to film studies by positing a parallel between the spectator in the audience and the child looking into the mirror. Lacan's theory of child development which is more commonly known as the Mirror Stage of development looks at the way in which ego formation in the child occurs at a time of limited motor development and results in an act of misrecognition. According to Lacan, between the age of six to eighteen months an important stage is reached in a child's development through their recognition of themselves as a whole being as reflected in a mirror. Lacan contrasts this identification with the sense of the unity of the body as it appears in the mirror, to the sense of fragmentation that the child feels in its body. Nevertheless, despite this disparity between identification and feeling the child delights in the image of unity that the mirror offers and comes to identify with that image. This is what is known as the process of ego formation, an essential part of human development. Lacan emphasises the disparity between identification and feeling in the mirror stage, labelling it as a moment of misrecognition, the beginning of a process of alienation as the image becomes confused with the true self and takes the place of the self. Baudry's¹² comparison of the cinema spectator to the child at this stage of development focuses on the process of identification that occurs between spectator and film character. For Baudry, this process is also a process of misrecognition as the spectator's alignment with the character on screen occurs at a time when he argues that their physical position within a darkened cinema encourages them to regress to a narcissistic state. In this state Baudry contends that the spectator is very susceptible to the power of the images appearing on screen. Baudry argues

"Five Lectures on Psycho-analysis: Lecture Four." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. III. London: The Hogarth Press. 1953-1974 p.47

⁸ Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" Trans: Bruce Fink. *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006. pp. 75-81

⁹ Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*. London: MacMillan, 1982.

¹⁰ Baudry, Jean-Louis. "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus." *Film Quarterly* 28.2 (1974-75): 39-47

¹¹ Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 6-18

¹² Baudry, Jean-Louis. "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus." *Film Quarterly* 28.2 (1974-75): 39-47

that cinema is a psychic apparatus whereby audience familiarity with the process of watching a film combined with the positioning of the spectator, both within the physical cinema itself and as an omnipresent being through the use of camera and editing within the individual film allows for a state of regression which encourages the spectator to passively accept the ideological message of the film.

Christian Metz¹³ developed Baudry's idea of cinema as an apparatus in which the spectator is positioned both within the physical confines of the cinema and as a passive spectator by the use of camera work and editing. Metz also relied strongly on Lacan's theory of the Mirror Stage of child development, using this theory to develop Baudry's work by suggesting that watching a film was not completely analogous to the position of the child before the mirror as the main difference that occurred in the cinema was that the gaze of the spectator towards the screen was not returned unlike that of the child in front of the mirror. For Metz this meant that the spectator was positioned as a voyeur before the screen and it was this position that gave the spectator great pleasure. This aspect of Metz's work on cinema as an apparatus relies strongly on Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex. In particular Metz's positioning of the spectator as a voyeur depends on an understanding of the role of disavowal and fetish which Freud suggested were the repercussions of an unsuccessfully completed passage through the oedipal stage of development. According to Freud, during the Oedipus complex the child realises that he must reject his desire for the mother due to the presence of the father whom the child fears will punish him for this desire. A successful journey through this stage of development involves the child repressing his desire for the mother on the understanding that one day he will possess a woman of his own and the entry into the world of law and language.

Metz further developed his theory by stating that the apparatus of cinema itself was oedipal in its processes of disavowal and fetishism. The spectator is aware the image on screen is imaginary, yet, nevertheless he believes in that image. However he remains aware that the cinema signifies what is absent; therefore the process of identification with the image on screen is an illusion, based on a lack. Being aware that the original events, the profilmic diegetic drama is missing, the spectator makes

¹³ Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*. London: MacMillan, 1982.

up for this absence by making a fetish of his love of the cinema itself. At the same time as the spectator is aware that what is happening on screen is not real, yet for the duration of the film he willingly suspends disbelief in the fictive nature of film: thus engaging in the process of disavowal.

Therefore both Baudry and Metz examine the idea of cinema as a psychic apparatus placing particular focus on the position of the spectator and the spectatorial response to film. Laura Mulvey develops these earlier theoretical writings on psychoanalytical film criticism by returning to Metz's notion of the unreturned gaze of the spectator towards the screen and she genders this gaze. Mulvey's article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"¹⁴ altered the debate within film studies and in particular within the area of psychoanalytical film theory. Traditionally according to Mulvey, men look and women are looked at. She argues that women are displayed in film as erotic objects. They are a major part of traditional Hollywood narrative films but their display holds up the action. The woman is displayed both for the audience and for the characters in the film. Man takes the active role in the film, pushing the narrative forward. This active male demands, and is given, three-dimensional space in the cinema, whereas the woman is often portrayed as flat/iconic. Gazing on and possessing the woman is problematic because it is also a reminder of her sexual difference. Woman as object is both pleasure and anxiety. There are two ways for the male viewer to deal with this anxiety: he can either: return to the source of the anxiety and punish her, or he can fetishise her; remove her power by viewing her body as fragmented.

The work of each of these film theorists has had a significant impact on the way in which psychoanalysis is used within the discipline of film studies. All three posit a spectator who is to some degree unaware of the ideological constructs of the film being watched. Also, all three refer to a regression which occurs within the spectator when he or she enters the cinema. In making a comparison between the spectator in the cinema and the child at either the Oedipal or Mirror Stage of development Baudry, Metz and Mulvey place a great significance on the way in which film has an unconscious influence over the spectator. The use of the term unconscious in this

¹⁴ Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 6-18

context usually refers to a spectator's unknowing response to a film. They use the developmental theories of Freud and Lacan to examine the way cinema operates as a transmitter of the dominant ideology of a society and the way in which a cinema offers pleasure to the viewer. In doing so, they place great emphasis on the unconscious and psychoanalytical response of a spectator towards a film, and a lesser emphasis on the conscious or rational response of a spectator towards a film. This criticism of psychoanalytical film theory has been made by David Bordwell and Noel Carroll¹⁵ and their post-theory, cognitive approach to film is in part a response to the way in which psychoanalytical film theory approaches spectator response to cinema as positioned. While the cognitivists illuminate one failing of psychoanalytical film theory the very success and influence of Baudry, Metz and Mulvey's approach to cinematic analysis has led to a homogenised and limited understanding of the terms "unconscious" and "psychoanalysis" within film studies. To date the term "the unconscious" has been understood to refer to the unconscious of the spectator or the director of a film. The term "psychoanalysis" has been used to refer to a variety of elements of representation within the fiction film whose meaning is best understood and theorised by reference to unacknowledged or latent desires within society at large (filmgoers and filmmakers), these powerful desires are generally understood to relate to an early stage of child development and are thus seen as primal desires or fears. The existence of such desires and the analysis of film as a medium for society to both express and also work through them has been the main concern of psychoanalytic film theory to date. What is lost in this presentation of both psychoanalysis and the unconscious is an understanding of how the unconscious of an individual character can be portrayed in film. In particular, as the work of Metz and Baudry draws attention to the means by which film encourages a process of identification between the spectator in the cinema and the character on screen, it has to be noted that psychoanalytical film theory has not examined an application of the terms "the unconscious" or "psychoanalysis" to characters within a film. This current research adapts both a broad and narrow approach to these terms. When seeking to expand the

¹⁵Carroll, Noel, and David Bordwell. *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.

understanding of these terms that exist within film theory its approach will be broad, particularly when expanding their application from extra-diegetic to diegetic. In order to achieve this aim there will be a narrow focus on the meaning of the term “the unconscious” as it is understood within the discipline of psychoanalysis. In order for this analysis to be undertaken it is necessary to return to the original works of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan on the unconscious. These works of psychoanalysis give a precise description of the unconscious as it relates to an individual human psyche. As the individual character in film is a representative of an individual human being it is this description of the unconscious that is relevant for the analysis undertaken in this thesis. Moreover, as this thesis analyses the representation of a character’s unconscious in film it is necessary first of all to describe what is meant by the term unconscious when it is applied to an individual psyche whether actual or fictional.

The unconscious in the works of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan

Freud and Lacan employ terms that are in common usage, terms such as pleasure, repression and the unconscious, but they use them with specific reference to a psychoanalytical context.¹⁶ Outside of this context their specific meaning slides and a term such as the unconscious is used to refer to repression, suppression, the dream state or a general unawareness, to name but a few. What is missing from this general understanding of the phrase the unconscious is an awareness of how this aspect of the psyche functions and interacts with consciousness. Freud and Lacan put forward a systematic series of procedures by which to understand the process of the unconscious with particular reference to its ability to reveal itself to consciousness. Most motivation for character action in the fiction film stems from consciousness not the unconscious. Fictional characters in film act and react to events that have a fantastical or realistic basis but rarely a basis in their own unconscious. This thesis contends that character motivation in film which originates in the unconscious will be

¹⁶ Charles Elder has written on the specificity of terms within psychoanalysis. *The Grammar of the Unconscious: The Conceptual Foundations of Psychoanalysis*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.

displayed differently and will impact on narrative structure in a manner that is different to that of motivation which originates in the consciousness.

The unconscious rests at the centre of Freud and Lacan's theory of psychoanalysis. Freud believed that the majority of mental processes were unconscious mental processes. In the first of his introductory lectures he is keen to distinguish between psychology and the new discipline of psychoanalysis. He makes this distinction by stating that:

...psycho-analysis declares that mental processes are in themselves unconscious and that of all mental life it is only certain individual acts and portions that are conscious. You know that on the contrary we are in the habit of identifying what is psychical with what is conscious. We look upon consciousness as nothing more nor less than the *defining* characteristic of the psychical, and psychology as the study of the context of consciousness.¹⁷

This primacy of the unconscious over consciousness is emphasised in his essay "The Unconscious" from 1915¹⁸. In that same year he also produces his work on repression and his essay on psychic drives or stimuli¹⁹. These are his most significant works on the role of the unconscious and they form the basis of the Freudian understanding of that term which informs this thesis. In these essays he describes the structure of the unconscious and its methods of operation with particular reference to how it interacts with consciousness. His first lectures in America²⁰ and his work on the interaction between the unconscious and consciousness in daily life²¹ further support his claim that the unconscious has a determining effect on all human actions and will also be used in this thesis to support the investigation into the representation

¹⁷ Freud, Sigmund. "Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis (Parts I and II)." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. XV. London: The Hogarth Press. 1953-1974. p. 21.

¹⁸ Freud, Sigmund "The Unconscious." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. XIV. London: The Hogarth Press. 1953-1974 pp. 159-195

¹⁹ Freud, Sigmund "Repression." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey Vol. XIV London: The Hogarth Press. 1953-1974 pp.146-158

²⁰ Freud, Sigmund. "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis" *The American Journal of Psychology*. Vol. 21.2 1910 : 181-218.

²¹ Freud, Sigmund. "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. VI. London: The Hogarth Press. 1953-1974 pp.1-279

of a character's unconscious on screen. His later work "Beyond the Pleasure Principle"²² which gives a detailed account of the repetition compulsion, the method by which the unconscious constantly seeks expression, informs the discussion of the use of techniques to represent the unconscious of a character.

The works of Jacques Lacan have also been consulted with reference to the role of the unconscious and the inter-relationship between the unconscious and consciousness. Four of his most important works are used in this thesis: "Beyond the Reality Principle" (1936)²³, "The Function and field of speech and language" (1953)²⁴, "Seminar on "The Purloined Letter"" (1956)²⁵ and "The agency of the letter in the unconscious or reason since Freud" (1957)²⁶. Lacan develops and elaborates on Freud's work on the unconscious, paying particular attention to the way in which the unconscious insists on being expressed as he details in his seminar on "The Purloined Letter". Whilst his work is indebted to that of Freud, as can be seen from his first major paper "Beyond the Reality Principle" in which he states that Freud's greatest contribution to the discipline of psychoanalysis was his emphasis on the importance of the role of the unconscious in the life of a human being, Lacan's development of Freud's work depended a great deal on his own emphasis on the role of speech and language in determining the existence and significance of the unconscious. Lacan's distinction between full and empty speech²⁷ differentiates between speech which is directed at another (empty) and speech which is more truly an articulation of unconscious desires and wishes (full). Full speech is often not as articulate or clear in its expression as empty speech; rather it often contains hesitations and repetitions. However, full speech is also repetitive, as it is the speech

²² Freud, Sigmund "Beyond the Pleasure Principle." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. XVIII. London: The Hogarth Press. 1953-1974 pp. 7-66

²³ Lacan, Jacques. "Beyond the "Reality Principle."" *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans: Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006. pp. 58-74

²⁴ Lacan, Jacques. *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis*. Trans. and comm. Anthony Wilden. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989. pp.1-87

²⁵ Lacan, Jacques. "Seminar on "The Purloined Letter."" *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans: Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006. pp. 6-48

²⁶ Lacan, Jacques. "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud" *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans: Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006. pp.412-441

²⁷ Lacan, Jacques. *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis*. Trans. and comm. Anthony Wilden. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989. pp1-87

of the unconscious, it insists on being heard and often repeats itself until this has been accomplished. This distinction between full and empty speech is useful when determining the methods by which the representation of the unconscious of a character is shown on screen. It will be used both to analyse dialogue scenes in the films chosen for this thesis and to undertake a close analysis of those films in relation to the way in which seemingly minor moments in these films which are nonetheless often repeated will come to signify the attempts of the unconscious of a character to be expressed.

The works of Freud and Lacan used in this thesis are not those which are often consulted in the area of film studies. However, as the purpose of this thesis is to examine the way in which the unconscious of an individual character is represented on screen it is necessary to firstly have an understanding of the term the unconscious from the point of view of the discipline of psychoanalysis. The essays by Freud and Lacan consulted here are their most significant works on the definition, role and structure of the unconscious and they have been chosen on this basis.

Criticism and analysis of the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski

Most analysis and criticism of the films of Luis Buñuel, Alfred Hitchcock and Krzysztof Kieślowski to date has approached the films of each director separately. The exception is Andre Bazin's book *The Cinema of Cruelty*²⁸ which looks at the films of Buñuel and Hitchcock from the perspective of their showing a realistic portrayal of human frailty. Apart from this text, and despite the fact that all three directors have a body of films in which the unconscious of a character is represented, there has been no published text on this phenomenon.

Luis Buñuel

The influence of Surrealism on the films of Luis Buñuel has been analysed by a variety of film critics. Most significant is Linda Williams' work²⁹ which focuses on the early films of Buñuel and argues that it is in their form rather than their content

²⁸ Bazin, André. *The Cinema of Cruelty: From Buñuel to Hitchcock*. Ed. François Truffaut. Trans. Sabine d'Estrée and Tiffany Fliss. New York: Seaver Books, 1982.

²⁹ Williams, Linda. *Figures of Desire: A Theory and Analysis of Surrealist Film*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

that they parallel the operations of the unconscious, in particular the dream state. Aswell as this text by Williams: work by Robert Short³⁰ and Harper and Stone³¹ also focus on the influence of the Surrealist movement on Buñuel's films and the extent to which these films can be seen as Surrealist works of art. While Williams and Short in particular, analyse the way in which the unconscious is represented in the earlier films of Buñuel, both focus on the unconscious as a term which is understood to describe the irrational and therefore see it as a means of viewing the world in a particular way which was imitative of the Surrealist aesthetic rather than a term which could be understood as belonging to the mental life of a particular character in these films. Works by Aranda³², Baxter³³, and Edwards³⁴ detail the biographical details of the filmmaker's life and analyse how those various components influenced the films he made, paying particular attention to the influence of the Surrealist movement, his Spanish origins and his Catholic upbringing. Continuing the Auteur reading of his films Raymond Durnat³⁵, Peter William Evans³⁶, Gwynne Edwards³⁷ and Joan Mellen³⁸ write or edit a series of essays on the uniqueness of Buñuel as a director and trace a variety of themes (including an interest in unconscious desire) and techniques which he returned to over the course of his career.

Alfred Hitchcock

A strong auteurist tradition also influences the critical analysis of the films of Alfred Hitchcock. The most comprehensive text is Robin Wood's *Hitchcock's Films Revisited*³⁹ which details a variety of themes which occur frequently in his films and analyses the way in which Hitchcock encourages audience's sympathy towards a

³⁰ Short, Robert. *The Age of Gold: Dalí, Buñuel, Artaud: Surrealist Cinema*. London: Solar Books, 2008.

³¹ Harper, Graeme, and Rob Stone, ed. *The Unsilvered Screen: Surrealism on Film*. London: Wallflower Press, 2007.

³² Aranda, J. Francisco. *Luis Buñuel: A Critical Biography*. Trans. David Robinson. London: Secker and Warburg, 1975.

³³ Baxter, John. *Buñuel*. New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998.

³⁴ Edwards, Gwynne. *A Companion to Luis Buñuel*. Suffolk: Tamesis, 2005.

³⁵ Durnat, Raymond. *Luis Buñuel*. London: Studio Vista Limited, 1967.

³⁶ Evans, Peter William. *The Films of Luis Buñuel: Subjectivity and Desire*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

³⁷ Edwards, Gwynne. *The Discreet Art of Luis Buñuel: A Reading of His Films*. London: Marion Bayers, 1992.

³⁸ Mellen, Joan, ed. *The World of Luis Buñuel: Essays and Criticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

³⁹ Wood, Robin. *Hitchcock's Films Revisited*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

character. While Wood writes about the portrayal of repressed desires in Hitchcock's films, mentioning particularly the characters of Guy (Farley Granger) in *Strangers on a Train* (1951) and Norman (Anthony Perkins) in *Psycho* (1960), he focuses on the repression of sexual desires. Therefore whilst Wood recognises an aspect of the unconscious (repression) which is part of the make up of at least two of Hitchcock's characters, his analysis of the representation of this aspect of the unconscious is used to explicate how this representation allows the audience to empathise with these characters in the recognition that all have repressed desires and urges. In this way Wood's recognition of the unconscious in Hitchcock's films is part of his thesis on the methods Hitchcock uses to encourage audience identification with a character rather than a representation of the unconscious of an individual character in a film. Whilst Wood, Truffaut⁴⁰, Durgnat⁴¹ and Rothman⁴² examine particular themes and tropes that occur regularly in the films of Alfred Hitchcock other critics analyse his films through the prism of psychoanalysis or feminism. Raymond Bellour's important text *The Analysis of Film*⁴³ gives a now traditional psychoanalytical reading of Hitchcock's films. In particular Bellour is influenced by the use to which the work of Lacan has been put in film studies, with many of the essays in this collection focusing on the positioning of the spectator and the significance of the point of view shot in relation to establishing a connection between camera, spectator and character. Tania Modleski follows this approach but examines Hitchcock's films through using a feminist approach in her work: *The Women who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock and Feminist Theory*.⁴⁴

Krzysztof Kiesłowski

To date most work on Kiesłowski considers him as an Auteur director or looks at his films within the context of Polish national cinema. Works by Marek Haltof⁴⁵ and

⁴⁰ Truffaut, François. *Hitchcock*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984.

⁴¹ Durgnat, Raymond. *The Strange Case of Alfred Hitchcock*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1974.

⁴² Rothman, William. *Hitchcock: The Murderous Gaze*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982.

⁴³ Bellour, Raymond. *The Analysis of Film*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

⁴⁴ Modleski, Tania. *The Women Who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock and Feminist Theory*. New York: Routledge, 1989.

⁴⁵ Haltof, Marek. *Polish National Cinema*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2002.

Paul Coates⁴⁶ on Polish cinema consider Kieślowski to be an important member of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety group in Polish cinema in the 1970s, both for his films and for his role as a leader in this group. Both writers also refer to his international success beginning with *The Decalogue* (1988) and consider his films after this date to be a departure from his previous work. Both authors have also produced individual texts on Kieślowski's films, Haltof⁴⁷ takes a chronological approach to his career, noting a move away from the political basis of his earlier films to more metaphysical concerns in his final films. In his edited collection, Coates⁴⁸ collects a series of Polish critical responses to Kieślowski's earlier work. In his own essay and in a separately published article⁴⁹ he has written on Kieślowski, Coates sees a spiritual and mystical theme running through his films, where the role of chance in human endeavour is brought to the forefront. The theme of chance is also considered in works by Annette Insdorf⁵⁰ and Slavoj Žižek⁵¹, both seeing a preoccupation with this theme in all Kieślowski's films. A philosophical, metaphysical view of Kieślowski is considered by Joseph Kickasola⁵². He describes Kieślowski's films as having three main components: immediacy, abstraction and transcendence. Immediacy is the idea that the image in these films communicates directly with the audience without the need for verbal articulation. Abstraction relates to form. It is a way of presenting an object outside of its everyday appearance in order to ask the audience to consider multiple possibilities. The transcendent refers to Kieślowski's metaphysical tendencies, his way of asking the audience to look beyond everyday reality. Kickasola's work is the only book length analysis of form, technique and style in Kieślowski's films and while he traces the development of that form over the course of Kieślowski's career, his reading of the relationship between form and content is

⁴⁶ Coates, Paul. *The Red and the White: The Cinema of People's Poland*. London: Wallflower, 2005.

⁴⁷ Haltof, Marek. *The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieślowski: Variations on Destiny and Chance*. London: Wallflower Press, 2004.

⁴⁸ Coates, Paul, ed. *Lucid Dreams: The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski*. Wiltshire: Flick Books, 1999.

⁴⁹ Coates, Paul. "Kieślowski and the Antipolitics of Colour: A Reading of the Three Colours Trilogy" *Cinema Journal*. 41.2 (2002): 41-66

⁵⁰ Insdorf, Annette. *Double Lives, Second Chances: The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieślowski*. New York: Hyperion, 1999.

⁵¹ Žižek, Slavoj. "Chance and Repetition in Kieślowski's Films" *Paragraph* 24.2 (2001): 27-44

⁵² Kickasola, Joseph G. *The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski: The Liminal Image*. New York: Continuum, 2004.

limited by his interest in Kieślowski as a filmmaker who is concerned with metaphysical issues. Most analysts acknowledge a change in both the content and form of Kieślowski's films that occurred during the middle period of his career. While some critics view this change as a development of his themes and style (Kickasola, Coates) and others as a decisive break from his earlier political concerns (Haltorf), nevertheless most recognise three distinctive periods in his career: his early documentaries (1966-1978), the start of his feature film making career and his involvement with the Cinema of Moral Anxiety (1979-1988) and his final international co-productions (1991-1994). However, there has yet been little analysis of the fact that Kieślowski's move from documentary to fiction film making occurred at the time of his involvement with the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement. The exception is Slavoj Žižek's work on reclaiming Lacan for film studies in which he uses Kieślowski's films as an exemplar: *The Frigate of Real Tears: Krzysztof Kieślowski between Theory and Post-Theory*⁵³ While the overall theme of this book is an examination of the use of suture in the process of audience alignment with character in the fiction film, the final third of this text examines Kieślowski's films in this context. In particular it analyses one of Kieślowski's stated reasons for moving from documentary films to fiction films (his fear that in capturing real tears he was intruding too much into the lives of the subjects of his documentaries)⁵⁴. Žižek then contends that it is only in the fiction film that the reality of subjective experience can be represented.⁵⁵ Using a variety of interview sources both with Kieślowski himself⁵⁶ and with his close collaborators⁵⁷ as well as essays on the political and social conditions in Poland at that time⁵⁸ this thesis contends that it was during this period

⁵³ Žižek, Slavoj. *The Frigate of Real Tears: Krzysztof Kieślowski between Theory and Post-Theory*. London: BFI Publishing, 2001.

⁵⁴ Stok, Danusia. p.86.

⁵⁵ Žižek, Slavoj. p.71

⁵⁶ Andrew, Geoff. *The 'Three Colours' Trilogy*. London: BFI Publishing, 2005

Coates, Paul, ed. *Lucid Dreams: The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski*. Wiltshire: Flick Books, 1999.

Stok, Danusia, ed. *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*. London: Faber and Faber, 1993.

⁵⁷ Piesiewicz, Krzysztof. Personal Interview by Felim McDermott. Warsaw, 2001.

Stuhr, Jerzy. Personal Interview by Veronica Johnson. Dublin, 10th November, 2006.

⁵⁸ Falkowska, Janina. "The Political in the Films of Andrzej Wajda and Krzysztof Kieślowski." *Cinema Journal* 34.2 (1995): 37-50.

Sobolewski, Tadeusz. "Ultimate Concerns." Ed. Paul Coates. *Lucid Dreams: The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski*. Wiltshire: Flick Books, 1999. pp. 19-31

that Kieslowski began to develop techniques that would allow him to depict the unconscious of an individual character in his later films.

Research carried out to date on the topic of the unconscious and cinema has focused on the relationship between the spectator and the screen, the examination of cinema as a transmitter of the dominant ideology of a society, a reading of films as containing the unconscious desires and/or fears of the director and a feminist reading of female representation in and reception of films. For the most part this analysis has depended on a reading of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan which focuses on the issues of repressed desire as articulated in Freud's Oedipus complex and issues of identification and the gaze as described in Lacan's Mirror Stage. This thesis seeks to broaden the relationship between film and psychoanalysis through an examination of a greater range of the works of Freud and Lacan which focus particularly on the role of the unconscious in mental life. This reading of the original psychoanalytical texts will then inform the close analysis of films in which the unconscious of a single character is represented.

Lubelski, Tadeusz. "From *Personnel* to *No End*: Kieslowski's Political Feature Films." Ed. Paul Coates. *Lucid Dreams: The Films of Krzysztof Kieslowski*. Wiltshire: Flick Books, 1999. pp. 54-76

Chapter One: The Freudian and Lacanian Unconscious

For I can assure you that it is quite possible, and highly probable indeed, that the dreamer *does* know what his dream means: only he does not know that he knows it and for that reason thinks he does not know it.⁵⁹

In the majority of Classical Hollywood films character motivation is clearly displayed for the audience whilst art-house and avant-garde cinema often provide loose connections between character action and the motivation for that action. However, in each of these three categories of film, character response and character action generally rely on psychological traits and/or emotional reasons. When film characters perform an action and/or respond to an event we generally attribute their motivation to reasons of jealousy, lust, anger or fear (emotional reasons) or to reasons of personality traits; reserve, confidence, insecurity, kindness (psychological motivation). In Classical Hollywood films these emotions and traits are clearly displayed, whilst the presentation in art-house and avant-garde films is more ambiguous. David Bordwell describes psychological motivation in Classical Hollywood films as follows:

The classical Hollywood film presents psychologically defined individuals who struggle to solve a clear-cut problem or to attain specific goals.... The principal causal agency is thus the character, a discriminated individual endowed with a consistent batch of evident traits, qualities, and behaviours.⁶⁰

While he acknowledges that psychological motivation for action plays a different role in the art-house film, nevertheless its significance for narrative development is recognised:

Certainly the art film relies upon psychological causation no less than does the classical narrative. But the prototypical characters of the art cinema tend to lack clear-cut traits, motives, and goals.⁶¹

⁵⁹Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XV. p.101

⁶⁰Bordwell, David. *Narration in the Fiction Film*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985. p.157

⁶¹Ibid. p.207

In fact Bordwell goes on to give greater significance to what he calls “psychological causation” in the art-house film by stating that art-house narration often involves a “boundary situation” which

... provides a formal centre within which conventions of psychological realism can take over. Focus on a situation’s existential import motivates characters’ expressing and explaining their mental states. Concerned less with action than reaction, the art cinema presents psychological effects in search of their causes.⁶²

Nevertheless, despite the variations in the clarity of presentation of character’s emotions and personality traits, most motivation for character action can be traced back to these two groups of causes.

While there are some film genres (suspense, mystery, crime) which withhold the motivation for character action from the audience, they do so on the basis of a tacit agreement with the audience that this is part of the generic convention. Apart from these particular genres it is unusual for a director not to indicate the reasons for character action and response to an audience. The films examined in this thesis are rare in that actions are motivated by the unconscious domain of a character. Here the character acts and responds to events without consciously knowing the reasons for these actions. This type of character motivation requires a different way of reading a film than that needed for the traditional psychological based motivation. In order to analyse the presentation of this type of motivation in film and to examine the type of film narrative it generates it is necessary to have a precise understanding of the term the unconscious with particular reference to its use in psychoanalysis. This chapter will describe the operations of the unconscious as detailed in the writings of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan in order to be able to represent its use as a motivating factor for character action in later chapters.

⁶² Ibid. p.208

Existence of the unconscious

According to Sigmund Freud, it is necessary to postulate the existence of the unconscious. This necessity comes from the inability of consciousness to account for every aspect of our daily lives. In particular, Freud refers to consciousness inability to account for certain acts; dreams and slips of the tongue but also consciousness does not explain all of our thoughts and ideas.

It is in an attempt to make sense of these gaps in consciousness that Freud states that it is necessary to postulate the existence of the unconscious. He opens his 1915 essay with a defence of the existence of the unconscious as follows:

Our right to assume the existence of something mental that is unconscious and to employ that assumption for the purposes of scientific work is disputed in many quarters. To this we can reply that our assumption of the unconscious is *necessary* and *legitimate*, and that we possess numerous proofs of its existence.

It is *necessary* because the data of consciousness have a very large number of gaps in them; both in healthy and in sick people psychical acts often occur which can be explained only by presupposing other acts, of which nevertheless, consciousness affords no evidence. These not only include parapraxes and dreams in healthy people, and everything described as a psychical symptom or an obsession in the sick; our most personal daily experience acquaints us with ideas that come into our head we do not know from where, and with intellectual conclusions arrived at we do not know how. All these conscious acts remain disconnected and unintelligible if we insist upon claiming that every mental act that occurs in us must also necessarily be experienced by us through consciousness; on the other hand, they fall into a demonstrable connection if we interpolate between them the unconscious acts which we have inferred. A gain in meaning is a perfectly justifiable ground for going beyond the limits of direct experience. When, in addition, it turns out that the assumption of there being an unconscious enables us to construct a successful procedure by which we can exert an effective influence upon the course of conscious processes, this success will have given us an incontrovertible proof of the existence of what we have assumed. This being so, we must adopt the position that to require that whatever goes on in the mind must also be known to consciousness is to make an untenable claim.⁶³

It is in an attempt to make sense of these gaps in consciousness that Freud states that it is necessary to postulate the existence of the unconscious. Together consciousness

⁶³ Freud, Sigmund "The Unconscious." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. XIV. London: The Hogarth Press. (1953-1974) pp. 166-7

and the unconscious give a true and full picture of the human psyche. Without the unconscious we are left with a consciousness that fails to adequately explain a great majority of our thoughts, ideas, behaviours and actions. Postulating the existence of the unconscious allows for these gaps in consciousness to be explained, to be understood. If we take Freud's position on the necessity of the existence of the unconscious as arising from the gaps that exist in consciousness, we are merely acknowledging those gaps in consciousness and expressing curiosity that these gaps could possibly be explained by the postulation of the unconscious. The next move then is to describe the unconscious and its methods of working in such a way as that existence and those methods will explain the gaps in consciousness in a way that does not refer to consciousness, thus establishing the unconscious as a separate part of the psyche. Freud's defence of the unconscious places a great emphasis on the fact that this aspect of the psyche has an influence on the everyday life of ordinary people. This is most important to consider when it comes to examining the representation of the protagonist's unconscious in film for there are few films which portray the unconscious of an ordinary character. For the most part notions of the unconscious have been utilised mostly in the genres of film noir and the serial killer genre. Representations of the unconscious in these genres have helped define the unconscious for a general audience as something mysterious and dark, lying outside the realm of knowledge and connected intimately with murderous outbursts. Often representations of the unconscious of a protagonist have been limited to an exploration of a character's sinister motivations for evil or criminal actions – the instigator and paradigm case being Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960).

Latency

Freud's description of the unconscious is careful to both recognise the relationship and interconnectedness between consciousness and unconscious and to mark the distinction between these two aspects of the psyche. He describes the unconscious as follows:

The unconscious comprises, on the one hand, acts which are merely latent, temporarily unconscious, but which differ in no other respect from conscious ones and, on the other hand, processes such as repressed ones,

which if they were to become conscious would be bound to stand out in the crudest contrast to the rest of the conscious processes.⁶⁴

The first significant aspect of the way the unconscious operates that is relevant for this thesis is the fact that unconscious thoughts, processes and desires are latent; that is to say that the conscious mind is unaware of unconscious mental processes. These unconscious mental processes can become conscious once they go through a system of testing. The importance of the existence of latent thoughts and desires to the issue of representing a character's unconscious on screen is that latency indicates that there is a multitude of mental processes of which the conscious mind is unaware. The significance of this aspect of the unconscious with regards to its representation in film is that it gives rise to a level of character motivation which will need to be explained after the actions which these latent processes have inspired. Freud first discusses thoughts which are "merely" latent,⁶⁵ that is thoughts of which the subject is currently unaware but which have the same quality as conscious thoughts and ideas. Accordingly the conscious mind can at some stage become aware of these thoughts, and the movement from unconscious to the conscious mind does not cause any disturbance to consciousness. He then goes on to consider other latent processes which are more than merely latent, "processes such as repressed ones, which, if they were to become conscious, would be bound to stand out in the crudest contrast to the rest of the conscious processes."⁶⁶ Latent mental processes transfer easily and smoothly from the unconscious to consciousness. Mental processes which have been repressed however have a more complicated journey between these two aspects of the psyche.

The unconscious insists on 'speaking': Repetition Compulsion and the Signifying Chain

Both Freud and Lacan allocate a linguistic structure to the unconscious. Freud emphasizes the significance of language in the exchange between analyst and analysand, or rather, the importance of the language the analysand uses to talk about him or herself:

⁶⁴ Freud, Sigmund Vol. XIV. p. 172

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Nothing takes place in a psycho-analytic treatment but an interchange of words between the patient and the analyst. The patient talks, tells of his past experiences and present impressions, complains, confesses to his wishes and his emotional impulses. The doctor listens, tries to direct the patient's processes of thoughts, exhorts, forces his attention in certain directions, gives him explanations, and observes the reactions of understanding or rejection which he in this way provokes in him.⁶⁷

This description of what happens in a psychoanalytic session not only indicates the significance of language in discovering the analysand's unconscious, it also gives a clear indication of the distinction between the discourse of the ego or consciousness and the discourse of the unconscious. For it is clear in Freud's account of the work of the analyst that there is something either wrong or missing in the speech of the analysand. The fact that the analysand relates "his past experiences and present impressions, complains, confesses to his wishes and his emotional impulses" would appear to give a fairly comprehensive coverage of his emotional state at the time of the psychoanalytical session. However, this is not enough for the analyst who must actively seek more words from the analysand and more importantly must interpret the words that have been spoken in order to go beyond ego talk to the discourse of the unconscious. There is therefore a separation between what the analysand says and the meaning of these words. It is only the analyst who can interpret the words of the analysand (the ego discourse) in order to discover how those words hide or reveal the language of the unconscious. Freud's most comprehensive work on language and the unconscious is *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* where he discusses parapraxes (slips of the tongue), moments where the incorrect word or phrase is uttered in place of the correct one. According to James Strachey, Freud had a "special affection" for parapraxes as they "...along with dreams, were what enabled him to extend to normal mental life the discoveries he had first made in connection with neuroses."⁶⁸ A parapraxis or slip of the tongue occurs when a word, or combination of words, is uttered unintentionally. Usually this unintended utterance takes the place of the

⁶⁷ Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XV. p.17

⁶⁸ Strachey, James. From the introduction to "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. By Sigmund Freud. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press. (1953-1974) p. xiii

intended word and is closely related to it whilst often having the opposite meaning to the word which was intended. For example, children in primary school often call out the unintended word “Mother” instead of the intended word “Teacher” when attempting to gain the attention of their female teacher. The unintended word indicates the presence of the unconscious which has grasped an opportunity for expression. It is as Strachey indicates an event which is frequently experienced by neurotics and those with a “normal mental life” alike and as such it is an aspect of unconscious activity that is universally experienced. The universality of the experience of parapraxis is significant when it comes to an analysis of the protagonists of Kieślowski’s films as these characters generally are in possession of a “normal mental life” unlike the protagonists of the Hitchcock films under discussion in this thesis, who exhibit psychotic or neurotic tendencies. Parapraxis is a specific example of the way in which the unconscious seeks expression through language in a manner which is experienced by all.

Throughout the section on parapraxes in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* Freud emphasises the importance of the need for linguistic expression of the unconscious while at the same time acknowledging that these moments of unconscious expression can be difficult to interpret as their appearance is so sudden and unintended and as the connection between the unintended word uttered and the unconscious intention is not a straightforward line. He states that the linguistic power of a parapraxis “gives the vivid impression of a will striving for a definite aim, and contradicts in a far more energetic way the notion that a parapraxis is a matter of chance and needs no interpretation.”⁶⁹ The “will striving for a definite aim” is the desire of the unconscious to be heard, to express itself. Later on Freud discusses the importance of morality and social mores in relation to the expression of parapraxis. Writing on the origin of thoughts that find expression in parapraxis he states:

...we can say that in a number of cases it is easy to show that the disturbing thoughts are derived from suppressed impulses in mental life. In healthy people, egotistic, jealous and hostile feelings and impulsions, on which the pressure of moral education weighs heavily, make frequent use of the pathway provided by parapraxis in order to find some expression for their

⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 238

strength, which undeniably exists but is not recognised by higher mental agencies.”⁷⁰

Here Freud is highlighting the struggle that is ongoing between conscious and unconscious linguistic expression. Consciousness keeps certain thoughts from expression; it possesses a censorship function through which the desires of the unconscious which are unpleasurable to consciousness are kept repressed. The importance of parapraxes for the film analysis being undertaken here lies not in specific examples, but rather in the way in which the existence of parapraxes as a universal experience of people with a “normal mental life” is strongly indicative of the linguistic base of the unconscious and of the desire of unconscious thoughts to find expression.

In 1956 Lacan delivered his seminar based on the Edgar Allan Poe short story “The Purloined Letter”. This seminar further develops Freud’s theories on the compulsion to repeat which he had first published in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle”(1920). Both these papers refer to the way in which the ideas, thoughts and desires of the unconscious seek expression. The aim of all unconscious mental processes is satisfaction. In order to achieve expression unconscious mental processes exert a constant pressure upon the conscious mind. In his seminar on “The Purloined Letter” Lacan develops his theories on the relationship between the unconscious, language and the Symbolic Order. The original story involves the receipt, theft and discovery of a letter that affects the behaviour of every character in the narrative. Lacan chose this story to illustrate the importance of the signifier as the contents of the letter are never revealed; it is as a symbol that it receives its meaning and importance. The letter is a pure signifier, the reader is unaware of its contents, it moves around among the characters of the story, affecting their behaviour unconsciously. They are at the mercy of this letter, this signifier, without being aware of their being so. This seminar is indebted to Freud’s work “Beyond the Pleasure Principle”, where Freud states that beyond the pleasure principle there is the repetition compulsion. The repetition compulsion shows the desire of the repressed

⁷⁰ Ibid p. 276

to be expressed. This can be seen in the way repressed matter repeats constantly. This is demonstrated in a psychoanalytical session according to Freud where:

The patient cannot remember the whole of what is repressed in him...He is obliged to repeat the repressed material as a contemporary experience instead of, as the physician would prefer to see, remembering as something belonging to the past.⁷¹

This repetition is an indication of the desire of the repressed to express itself, to gain entrance into the conscious mind and thus have its desires satisfied. The way in which repressed matter continually tries to gain entrance into the conscious mind through repetition is an aspect of the unconscious that lends itself to portrayal in film and that was used to great effect in *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue*. In these films it is the constant representation of the return of the repressed which is repeated throughout the narrative that allows the audience to become familiar with the technique used for this representation of the unconscious. The compulsion to repeat overrides the pleasure principle according to Freud as it “recalls from the past experiences which include no possibility of pleasure, and which can never, even long ago, have brought satisfaction even to instinctual impulses which have since been repressed”.⁷² In this manner the strength of unconscious desires can be seen. For despite the fact that these repeated actions bring no pleasure, the subject is obligated to continue to repeat them again and again. This paper indicates the power of the unconscious over an individual’s actions and behaviour and again Freud takes pains to indicate that it is not only in the case of neurotics or hysterics that the unconscious has this determining force. He gives examples of how this compulsion to repeat actions, whilst simultaneously being unaware of the motivation of these actions, and in some cases even unaware that they are repeated, actions affects all:

The impression they give is of being pursued by a malignant fate or possessed by some ‘daemonic’ power; but psychoanalysis has always taken the view that their fate is for the most part arranged by themselves and determined by early infantile influences. The compulsion which is here in evidence differs in no way from the compulsion to repeat which we have

⁷¹ Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XVIII. p.18

⁷² Ibid. p.20

found in neurotics, even though the people we are now considering have never shown any signs of dealing with a neurotic conflict by producing symptoms. Thus we have come across people all of whose human relationships have the same outcome: such as the benefactor who is abandoned in anger after a time by each of his protégés, however they may otherwise differ from one another, and who thus seems doomed to taste all the bitterness of ingratitude; or the man whose friendships all end in betrayal by his friend; or the man who time after time in the course of his life raises someone else into a position of great private or public authority and then, after a certain interval, himself upsets that authority and replaces him by a new one; or, again, the lover each of whose love affairs with a woman passes through the same phases and reaches the same conclusion.⁷³

Lacan further developed this theory of the relationship between the unconscious, truth and language in his paper “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis”⁷⁴ (1953), usually known as “The Rome Discourse”. In this paper Lacan distinguishes between “full” speech and “empty” speech. “Full” speech is the speech of the unconscious, it is this speech that the analyst must listen to; “empty” speech is the speech of the ego. The ego orders language in a certain way which does not lend itself to truth. This ordering of language is directed at the other; that is at the imaginary counterpart of the speaker. Lacan seeks in this paper to establish the importance of the unconscious for the constitution of the individual and the importance of language and speech to the understanding of the unconscious. This insistence of the unconscious on being heard, on being expressed indicated to Lacan the importance of the unconscious as regards its ability to determine the location of the true subject. He elaborates on this idea in his paper “The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason since Freud”, 1957. Here Lacan outlines the rupture that has occurred in our understanding of reason since Freud’s ‘discovery’ of the unconscious. Benvenuto and Kennedy indicate that in this paper Lacan states that reason is now to be found in the unconscious:

Reason is now the insistence of a meaning, the primacy or authority of a letter which insists on being expressed or heard. The letter marks the subject

⁷³ Ibid. pp. 21-2

⁷⁴ Lacan, Jacques. “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis.” *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans: Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006. pp. 197-268

like a carved Egyptian inscription, it ‘pains’ in psychosomatic symptoms, it is the language spoken by and in the unconscious.⁷⁵

Lacan’s basis for examining the relationship between the unconscious and reason rests in his theory of the importance of the signifier. Here Lacan questions the relationship between signifier and signified, emphasising the independence of the signifier and stating that meaning does not arise in a single signifier but rather in the way that each signifier is related to another signifier in a chain of meaning. Each signifier also has multiple contexts:

Indeed, there is no signifying chain that does not sustain - as if attached to the punctuation of each of its units - all attested contexts that are, so to speak, “vertically” linked to that point..⁷⁶

The notion of each signifier having multiple meanings which is expressed in the quotation above is a method by which Lacan reinforces his argument that the unconscious has its own way of producing meaning that is parallel to the way meaning is produced in conscious thought. If each signifying chain releases a multiplicity of contexts, it is likely that not all of these contexts will have a structure that is familiar to the conscious mind, many of these contexts will only make ‘sense’ in the realm of the unconscious.

The subject of the unconscious was for Lacan the true subject, as opposed to the subject of the ego. In analysis, the psychoanalyst must listen to what appears to be illusory or non-rational expressions from the client. When the client, through analysis is permitted to speak without rules it is possible that the unconscious thoughts come to the fore and form a chain of meaning.

Thus in analysis, the chain of unconscious purposive ideas (or, in linguistic terms, the signifying chain) insists on being expressed and heard, beyond any attachment to a pleasure/unpleasure principle, or the ego’s attempts to stifle meaning. As can be seen vividly in the Poe essay, it was Lacan’s significant contribution to emphasize the importance for the subject, both

⁷⁵ Benvenuto, Bice and Roger Kennedy. *The Works of Jacques Lacan: An Introduction*. London: Free Association Books, 1986. p.107

⁷⁶ Lacan, Jacques. p. 419

inside and outside analysis, of the repetition of a chain of meaning in a symbolic circuit.⁷⁷

This insistence of the unconscious on being heard, on being expressed, indicated to Lacan the importance of the unconscious as regards its ability to determine the location of the true subject. It is the insistence of the unconscious to be expressed that gives sense to actions which otherwise do not make sense. In his analysis of action of the characters in “The Purloined Letter” Lacan points to the fact that without the existence of the letter (which is pure signifier in that its contents are never revealed) the actions of the characters in the story would have little or no meaning. However, at the same time all actions in this story are based on the existence of this letter, the fate of the characters is determined by a letter whose contents they are not aware of.

Both Freud and to a greater degree Lacan in his interpretation of Freud place a great emphasis on the way in which the unconscious determines an individuals’ actions and behaviour while at the same time indicating that unconscious matter does not reveal itself to consciousness without disguise:

For we have learned to conceive of the signifier as sustaining itself only in a displacement...this is because of the alternating operation at its core that requires it to leave its place, if only to return to it by a circular path. This is what happens in repetition automatism. What Freud teaches us...is that the subject follows the channels of the symbolic...It is not only the subject, but the subjects...who...model their very being on the moment of the signifying chain that runs through them. If what Freud discovered, and rediscovers ever more abruptly, has a meaning, it is that the signifier’s displacement determines subjects’ acts, destiny, refusals, blindnesses, success, and fate, regardless of their innate gifts and instruction, and regardless of their character or sex; and that everything pertaining to the psychological pre-given follows willy-nilly the signifier’s train, like weapons and baggage.⁷⁸

The compulsion to repeat, what Lacan calls “repetition automatism” which indicates the power of the unconscious over the individual opens up a series of possibilities and problems for filmmakers. On the one hand Freudian and Lacanian theories of the

⁷⁷Benvenuto, Bice, and Roger Kennedy. p.93

⁷⁸Lacan, Jacques. p.21

unconscious open up a treasure trove of motivating factors which could possibly be used to instigate the actions of a character or as an explanation for their behaviour. On the other hand the fact that the unconscious always reveals itself to consciousness through a displacement gives rise to problems concerning coherency of cause and effect if it was to be used as a motivation for action in film.

Repression

Mental processes, events, thoughts, desires and ideas which have been repressed are processes which have been denied to the conscious mind. Repression consists in *“turning something away, and keeping it at a distance, from the conscious”*⁷⁹ This thesis examines a range of events which the protagonists of different films have turned and kept away from their conscious self. Freud states that a repressed drive has an urge to enter consciousness⁸⁰; it exerts a constant pressure on the conscious mind which is met by a counter-pressure. More important is the ability of the drive to disguise itself in order to enter consciousness; it changes its mode of expression.⁸¹ Some derivatives of the repressed make their way to the conscious mind if they are altered enough and far enough removed from the original repressed material. The further away the derivative is from the repressed material the better the chance it has of entering the conscious mind. If it becomes remote enough from the original material the conscious mind will remove resistance to it:

We can lay down no general rule as to what degree of distortion and remoteness is necessary before the resistance on the part of the conscious is removed. A delicate balancing is here taking place, the play of which is hidden from us; its mode of operation, however, enables us to infer that it is a question of calling a halt when the cathexis of the unconscious reaches a certain intensity – an intensity beyond which the unconscious would break through to satisfaction. Repression acts, therefore, in a highly individual manner. Each single derivative of the repressed may have its own special vicissitude; a little more or a little less distortion alters the whole outcome.⁸²

⁷⁹Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XIV. p. 147

⁸⁰Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XVIII. p.19

⁸¹Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XIV. p.149

⁸² Ibid. p. 150

Freud states a drive can be frightening in its presentation to consciousness as it intensifies and develops in the unconscious.⁸³ As a result of this change in appearance of the repressed matter and its frightening effect when it does enter the conscious mind it is only with this disguised presentation that the source and operation of repression can be discovered. “The mechanism of a repression becomes accessible to us only by our deducing that mechanism from the *outcome* of the repression.”⁸⁴ Here Freud is moving away from a description of the operation of repression within the unconscious (the desire to enter consciousness and the disguise in order to achieve that desire) towards a description of the way repressed matter can be recognised when it “returns” to consciousness. The return of the repressed marks the reappearance of the repressed material, now disguised, into consciousness. This return is marked by symptoms which originate in the initial traumatic event. “...symptoms are the remnants and the memory symbols of certain (traumatic) experiences.”⁸⁵ It is only by the appearance of the return of the repressed through symptoms or substitute formations that it is possible to discover that something has been repressed in the first place.

It is symptoms and substitute formations that are of most use to the filmmaker who seeks to represent an individual character’s unconscious on screen. For both these types of manifestations of the return of the repressed lend themselves to visual and/or verbal expression. Substitute formation is a process whereby the repressed idea is replaced by a substitute idea. This new idea is far enough removed from the initial traumatic event to gain entrance into the conscious mind. It is a defence process and it allows the subject to consider the danger to come from external rather than internal sources.⁸⁶ Again this mechanism of repression offers the filmmaker something to work with in that the new idea which has displaced the original repressed material causes such a strong reaction in the subject that they attempt to avoid it to the extent that it becomes a phobic fear.

⁸³ Ibid. p.149

⁸⁴Ibid. p. 154

⁸⁵ Ibid. p.187

⁸⁶Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XIV. p. 183

The ego behaves as if the danger of a development of anxiety threatened it not from the direction of an instinctual impulse but from the direction of a perception, and it is thus enabled to react against this external danger with the attempts at flight represented by phobic avoidances. In this process repression is successful in one particular: the release of anxiety can to some extent be dammed up, but only at a heavy sacrifice of personal freedom. Attempts at flight from the demands of instinct are, however, in general useless, and, in spite of everything, the result of phobic flight remains unsatisfactory.⁸⁷

...we find that derivatives of the *Ucs.* become conscious as substitutive formations and symptoms – generally, it is true, after having undergone great distortion as compared with the unconscious, though often retaining many characteristics which call for repression.⁸⁸

Empty Speech and Full Speech

While Freud was the first psychoanalyst to view language as the working material of psychoanalysis it was Jacques Lacan who developed a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between language and the unconscious based on Freud's work. Lacan's most significant paper on this topic is "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis". This paper not only establishes Lacanian psychoanalysis but more importantly it aims to return to Freud's preoccupation with the properties of language and in particular it distinguishes between conscious and unconscious speech.⁸⁹ Lacan described the speech of the ego or consciousness as "Empty speech" and the speech of the unconscious as "Full speech".⁹⁰ Empty speech, the speech of the ego is an appeal to the person to whom the speech is addressed for a response.⁹¹ The challenge for the analyst in a psychoanalytical setting is to withhold a response to this speech of the ego and to listen for the full speech of the unconscious. "Responding to the subject's empty speech – even and especially in an approving manner – often proves, by its effects, to be far more frustrating than silence."⁹² According to Lacan this is due to the fact that at some level the analyst and

⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 184

⁸⁸ Ibid. p.193

⁸⁹ Benvenuto, Bice, and Roger Kennedy. p. 80

⁹⁰ Lacan, Jacques. "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis." *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans: Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007. p.206-220

⁹¹ Ibid. p.206

⁹² Ibid. p.207

realises that his speech is empty, or rather, that it is a word picture of the self he or she wants to present to the world and that this picture of the self is constructed in order to please the person from whom his speech is demanding a response:

Doesn't the subject become involved here in an ever greater dispossession of himself as a being, concerning which...he ends up recognising that this being has never been anything more than his own construction [*oeuvre*] in the imaginary and that this construction undercuts all certainty in him? For in the work he does to reconstruct it *for another*, he encounters anew the fundamental alienation that made him construct it *like another*, and that has always destined it to be taken away from him *by another*.⁹³

Were the analyst to engage with this empty speech, to take it at face value, her or she would only be engaging with the image of the self that the analysand projects to the world rather than the more complex self that remains hidden behind this empty ego speech. However, this speech is the only working material that the analyst has at his or her disposal in a psychoanalytic session. The task for the analyst is two-fold: firstly, he or she must refuse to respond in kind to the analysand's empty ego speech and secondly the analyst must decipher the presence of the unconscious in these same words:

Even if it communicates nothing, discourse represents the existence of communication; even if it denies the obvious, it affirms that speech constitutes truth; even if it is destined to deceive, it relies on faith in testimony.

Thus the psychoanalyst knows better than anyone else that the point is to figure out [*entendre*] to which "part" of this discourse the significant term is relegated, and this is how he proceeds in the best of cases: he takes the description of an everyday event as a word to the wise, a long *prosopopeia* as a direct interjection, and, contrariwise, a simple slip of the tongue as a highly complex statement, and even the rest of a silence as the whole lyrical development it stands in for.⁹⁴

What the analyst is searching for in sessions with the analysand is these moments which reveal the analysand's unconscious. The unconscious contains that which is forgotten or hidden by the analysand and therefore it will not reveal itself through

⁹³ Ibid. pp. 207-8

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 209

direct speech.⁹⁵ It is only in dialogue with another person (here the analyst) that the unconscious will express itself though not in a manner that is either clearly or immediately understood by either the speaker or the listener. “The unconscious is that part of concrete discourse qua transindividual, which is not at the subject’s disposal in re-establishing the continuity of his conscious discourse.”⁹⁶

The signifier takes the subject’s place, standing in for the subject who has now vanished. This subject has no other being than as a break in discourse. The subject of the unconscious manifests itself in daily life as a fleeting irruption of something foreign or extraneous. Temporally speaking, the subject appears only as a pulsation, an occasional impulse or interruption that immediately dies away or is extinguished, “expressing itself”, as it does, by means of the signifier.⁹⁷

Bruce Fink describes the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious as follows:

Psychoanalysis begins with the presupposition that that Other kind of talk stems from *an other* which is locatable in some sense; it holds that unintentional words that are spoken, blurted out, mumbled, or garbled come from *some other place*, some other agency than the ego. Freud called that Other place the unconscious, and Lacan states in no uncertain terms that “the unconscious is the Other’s discourse”, that is, the unconscious consists of those words which come from some other place than ego talk.⁹⁸

This description indicates the types of agency in the psyche; conscious and unconscious. Both exist and both influence human behaviour and action, however as Fink indicates only one is actively known, the other, the unconscious remains hidden from consciousness:

The unconscious is not something one knows, but rather something that is known. What is unconscious is known unbeknownst to the “person” in question: it is not something one “actively”, consciously grasps, but rather something which is “passively” registered, inscribed, or counted.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Ibid. p.215

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 214

⁹⁷ Ibid. p.41

⁹⁸ Fink, Bruce. *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, New Jersey, 1995. p. 3-4.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p.23

In a psychoanalytical session between analyst and analysand the analyst will attempt to ignore the ego talk of the analysand and instead will listen for the discourse of the unconscious. It is a discipline and a practice whose subject is the unconscious. In film the active, knowing actions of the protagonist guide the narrative and its progression. Something which is “known unbeknownst to the “person” in question” provokes challenges for character presentation and narrative progression.

This chapter has examined the following elements of unconscious behaviours that have been described by Freud and Lacan: latency, repression, repetition compulsion and the signifying chain, and empty and full speech. The existence of these behaviours indicates a motivating force for human action that remains hidden from consciousness. The dominance of the visual moving image and the tradition of the sequential ordering of events predicated on causal links in film have given rise to a clear presentation of the causes for character motivation which rely on psychological or emotional motivation. However, there are some films which rely on the more hidden factors of motivation for character that are described above as being part of the unconscious. The following chapter examines two types of films in which this hidden but persistent motivation is given dominance.

Chapter Two: Dreams and Psychosis

The advertised premise of being able to penetrate a human being's inner world doubled the sensation that early cinema produced. Not only were amazing new visual devices and technical wonders being offered: invisible worlds were suddenly made visible as if by magic.¹⁰⁰

Horror-movie madmen...are ...victims of overpowering impulses that well up from within; monsters brought forth by the sleep of reason, not by its attractions. Horror-movie psychotics murder, terrorise, maim and rape because of some inner compulsion, because the psyche harbours the dangerous excesses of human passion.¹⁰¹

This chapter examines two film genres which foreground the unconscious of a protagonist. The first of these is the dream films of early cinema. The second is a type of horror or thriller film in which the main protagonist is a psychotic (often serial) killer. The dream films of early cinema are exclusively interested in the representation of the protagonist's unconscious on screen. These films present the protagonist's unconscious in order to display the technical abilities of the new medium of cinema. They offer the spectator a direct presentation of the experience of dreaming – that aspect of the unconscious which is familiar to all. In directly presenting the unconscious of the protagonist to the audience through the dream state, the dream films of early cinema presume an ability on the part of the audience to recognise this state and thus to recognise a representation of the protagonist's unconscious on screen. The horror film which features a psychotic killer as a protagonist references the unconscious of that character as a motivating factor for the murderous acts this character carries out during the course of the film. In this genre the narrative function of the protagonist's unconscious takes precedence over its visual representation on screen. This section will investigate the dream films of early cinema and the horror film which features a psychotic killer, with reference to the role and representation of the unconscious of the protagonist on screen, as these are the main type of films which consistently refer to the unconscious of the protagonist.

¹⁰⁰ Marinelli, Lydia. Trans. Christopher Barber. "Screening Wish Theories: Dream Psychologies and Early Cinema" *Science in Context* 19.1(2006): p.105

¹⁰¹ Tudor, Andrew. p. 185

It will examine the narrative structure of the psychotic killer genre as its format of producing a retrospective understanding of character action and motivation is reproduced in the films of Hitchcock and Kieślowski. The direct presentation of the protagonist's unconscious which occurs in the dream films of early cinema will also be examined in this section as this format demands a type of audience relation to the protagonist which finds equivalence in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski.

The dream films of early cinema

While issues of the representation of a protagonist's unconscious might not seem compatible with the limited technical abilities of early cinema there was one aspect of unconscious behaviour which fascinated early filmmakers: that of dreams and dream life. Many films which had dreams as their subject were made in this early period of the development of cinema. Lydia Marinelli indicates that there was a widespread interest at this time in portraying altered mental states in general, but that the dream state was the most popular mental state portrayed:

The dream was not the only mental phenomenon to be displayed using cinematic trickery during this era. As a rule, psychical states were presented in the form of a loss of control over consciousness, which was usually weakened by drugs, hypnosis, or forces affecting a sleeper (somnambulists). Nonetheless, no other mental state was so extensively exploited as the dream.¹⁰²

Gunning confirms the popularity of dreams as a subject for films at this time stating:

Dreams materialise frequently in pre-1908 cinema. The discontinuity between real life and dreams forms a favourite subject of early cinema, attracting filmmakers between 1900-1906 more than at any other point in film history.¹⁰³

While it is difficult to generalise about a period of cinematic history in which many films have been subsequently lost, there are aspects of these dream films that are significant to the way in which the unconscious of the protagonist was later portrayed

¹⁰² Marinelli, Lydia. p.91

¹⁰³ Gunning, Tom. *D.W. Griffith and the Origins of American Narrative Film: The Early Years at Biograph*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994. p.116

in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski. Some of these early dream films present the dream of the character in a manner which replicates the experience of dreaming itself. That is to say these films present the experience of the dreamer as they are dreaming. In *Uncle Josh's Nightmare* (Thomas Edison, 1900), *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend* (Edwin Porter, 1906), and *The Sculptor's Nightmare* (Wallace McCutcheon, 1908) the characters react with astonishment to the events that befall them during their dreams, as these films operate on the premise that the character who is dreaming is not aware that they are dreaming. Thus the fantastical events of their dreams seem real and at the same time incomprehensible to them. These characters are experiencing an aspect of their unconscious, directly and vividly in the same way that the protagonists of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski's films also experience it.

Tom Gunning divides early cinema into two distinct periods based on the development of the narrative system of the new medium. Cinema prior to 1908 he labels the "cinema of attractions" as it was around this date that cinema began to move towards narration and characterisation. In particular he states that prior to 1904 narrative was a secondary concern of early film. He says that the "cinema of attractions" was "interested in the display of curiosities" and that after 1908 film became "a cinema of narrative integration which subordinates film form to the development of stories and characters".¹⁰⁴ Gunning's "cinema of attractions" describes early films which were interested in the act of display. These films showed actions and events that were particularly suited to the abilities of this new medium to capture movement: boxing and dancing films were particularly dominant. Equally this idea of display concerned not only the content of these films but also an exploration of the capabilities of film itself: cutting from one scene to another, pans, tracking shots etc. He defines the cinema of attractions as follows:

...the cinema of attractions directly solicits spectator attention, inciting visual curiosity and supplying pleasure through an exciting spectacle – a unique event, whether fictional or documentary, that is of interest in itself. The attraction to be displayed may also be of a cinematic nature, such ... close-ups... or trick films in which a cinematic manipulation (slow motion, reverse motion, substitution, multiple exposure) provides the film's novelty.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p.6

Fictional situations tend to be restricted to gags, vaudeville numbers or recreations of shocking or curious incidents (executions, current events). It is the direct address of the audience, in which an attraction is offered to the spectator by a cinema showman, that defines this approach to filmmaking. Theatrical display dominates over narrative absorption, emphasising the direct stimulation of shock or surprise at the expense of unfolding a story or creating a diegetic universe. The cinema of attractions expends little energy creating characters with psychological motivations or individual personality. Making use of both fictional and non-fictional attractions, its energy moves outward towards an acknowledged spectator rather than inward towards the character-based situations essential to classical narrative.¹⁰⁵

The cinema of attractions is a cinema in which spectacle is directly displayed for the audience's enjoyment. It is according to Gunning, primarily an exhibitionist cinema¹⁰⁶ which presents a spectacle to the audience with little or no concern with narrative structure. In the cinema of attractions display takes precedence over story.

The dream films of early cinema contain many of the elements Gunning describes as defining the cinema of attractions. They directly address the audience in their content and form. Characters fly, disappear and reappear and fantasies are displayed on screen. In Edwin Porter's *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend* (1906) the protagonist has fantastical dreams after overindulging in food and drink. He sees his bed and other objects in his room move about in a disconcerting fashion. Eventually his bed takes flight and he soars over the city before landing back in his room where order is restored. *The Sculptor's Nightmare* and *Uncle Josh's Nightmare* follow a similar format to *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend*. Uncle Josh has to contend with a figure dressed as the devil that magically appears and disappears whilst disrupting the protagonist's sleep. *The Sculptor's Nightmare* also attributes fantastical dreams to an over indulgence in food and drink. In this film, on receiving a commission for a bust of Theodore Roosevelt the sculptor spends the advance on food and drink and is arrested after causing a disturbance in a restaurant. Whilst asleep in jail three plinths appear and through stop-motion the clay on each of them is moulded into three different busts. The sculptor rises from the bed and interacts with these busts until

¹⁰⁵ Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde." *Early Cinema: Space/Frame/Narrative* Ed. Thomas Elsaesser and Adam Barker. London: BFI Publishing, 1990. pp. 58-9

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 57

they too disappear. Whilst sleeping once more the Roosevelt bust appears. In both content and form these films are a good example of early cinema's delight in display and they illustrate the unlikely but compatible union of film and the unconscious at this early period in the development of cinema. For in these films it is the use of the new technical capabilities of the medium of film to present the dream that is the attraction:

A fundamental difference from the literary treatment of dream scenarios is that literature was concerned with narrative continuity and provided justification for the presentation of something as a dream instead of a report of waking reality, while cinema initially celebrated the pure act of showing, the sheer excitement of being able to unfold mental inner states before the eyes of its viewers.¹⁰⁷

The new medium of cinema allowed for a representation of aspects of unconscious life, in this case dreams, where the representation mimicked the experience of dreaming itself. The lack of a complex narrative in these films is of benefit to the presentation of the dream, for it allows for a union of confusion between the protagonist and the spectator with regards to what is actually happening and why. They can be watched as a series of fantastical events that befalls the unfortunate protagonist and in this way they are a very good example of the "cinema of attractions": a display of a variety of curiosities. On the other hand the direct display of the sensation of the world actually turning upside down (as is represented in *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend*) whilst dreaming is presented with such vigour and immediacy that it is readily identifiable as an experience from actual (dreaming) life. These films delight in the other world of dreams and the unconscious and they present this world directly as spectacle in much the same way that various film displays of boxing or dancing displayed those activities. The difference in *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend*, *Uncle Josh's Nightmare* and *The Sculptor's Nightmare* is that the activity on display is unconscious rather than conscious.

Two other films from this era show an alternative, less direct way of presenting a dreaming character on film: *Histoire d'un crime* (Ferdinand Zecca, 1901) and *Life of an American Fireman* (Edwin Porter, 1903). Both films display the dream image

¹⁰⁷ Marinelli, Lydia. p.90

in a similar manner. In *Histoire d'un crime* the criminal sleeps in his cell while his dream is inserted into the scene, indicating a detached, objective position on behalf of the dreamer and the audience as opposed to the more subjective experience of dreaming that was displayed in *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend*, *Uncle Josh's Nightmare* and *The Sculptor's Nightmare*. In *Life of an American Fireman* the film opens with a napping fireman and a circular insert indicates what he is dreaming about. These films directly connect the dreamer and the dream by placing both within the same frame on screen. They are a primitive but nonetheless effective way of indicating a character's subjectivity and in this way they give the audience a privileged insight into the inner mental states of the character. In *Histoire d'un crime* this works particularly well as the prisoner's dream consists of a series of memories from the time before he committed his crime and this display of his past allows for a certain development of his character. The dream insert in *Life of an American Fireman* is briefer than that of *Histoire d'un crime* but it follows the same format of displaying the dream on screen within the same frame as that of the dreamer. While both films make a direct link between dreamer and dream, the display of the dream on screen keeps it removed from being experiential simply by the act of display itself being separate from the sleeping dreamer. By framing the dream within the sleeping chamber of the dreamer a certain element of distance between the dreamer and the dream occurs. Framing the dream within a shot of a sleeping character also gives the audience the impression that they are watching a dream rather than watching what the character experiences as they have a dream. This is a subtle distinction but one that is important to the way in which other dream films portray the relationship between dream and dreamer and it is also significant with regards to the representation of the unconscious in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski. For in some early dream films, as well as in the films of these later directors, there is an attempt to portray the unconscious by approximating the interaction between conscious and unconscious life.

Representing the unconscious in *Let Me Dream Again*

An early dream film which indicates a more direct connection between dreamer and dream and thus relates to the methods of representing the unconscious in the films of

Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski is *Let Me Dream Again* (G.A. Smith, 1900). In this film the dreamer is presented as being unaware that he is dreaming. This representation of the dream affects the relationship between film and spectator according to Lydia Marinelli¹⁰⁸ As this film presents the dream directly to the audience, as they too do not know that the dreamer is dreaming, the viewer undergoes a more direct link to the character who is experiencing the dream. Despite the title of the film (*Let Me Dream Again*) indicating the content, it is not clear at the beginning of the film that it has opened with the dream sequence. In this film there is no separation between the viewer and the dream, this allows the viewer to feel as if they were experiencing the dream as it occurs to the dreamer. Marinelli states that:

The form in which the protagonist's inner world is presented has an effect on the organisation of the relationship between film and viewer. While in *Histoire d'un crime*, there the dream is treated as an insert, the viewer and the protagonist maintain the same distance to the dream as the projected film, Porter employs a different variant...the viewer is tied directly to the events of the dream, thus becoming the sole observer of a subjective consciousness.¹⁰⁹

The experience of being the “sole observer of a subjective consciousness” promotes a greater connection between audience and character than would otherwise be the case. While the content of the dreams portrayed in this film is not complex, being a straight forward wish fulfilment dream, the fact that this is a commonplace dream works in its favour with regards to linking the audience with the character who is having the dream. There is an element of recognition with regards to the topic of the dream, the audience can recognise that they have had a similar type of dream and this lends authenticity to the portrayal of the dream and thus furthers the connection between dreamer and spectator. The significance of this film with regards to a cinematic representation of a protagonist's unconscious is that it presents the dream as the dreamer experiences it. It represents what it is to experience a dream whilst having a dream.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p.105

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Let Me Dream Again takes the attempt to reproduce the actual experience of dreaming within the film a step further by withholding any diegetic indication that a dream is taking place until after the dream is finished. In all of the other films discussed in this section the dream portion of the film is prefaced by a sleeping protagonist. As well as there being no prior indication of the dream the film makes little distinction between the dream and non-dream world with regards to shot composition and framing. There is no prior indication that the dreamer is dreaming it is only retrospectively that the experience is understood to have been a dream and this perhaps is the most significant way in which this film reproduces the experience of having a dream. The film consists only of two shots. The first shot features a very pleased looking man sitting beside a beautiful and much younger woman. He flatters her and feeds her titbits and she responds with a kiss. At the moment of the kiss we cut to the second shot which shows the man lying awake in bed kissing his much older and much less beautiful wife. Lydia Marinelli describes this film as follows:

In the first shot neither the space nor the couple's gestures provide any indicator of a dream. It is the second shot that defines the first retrospectively: the scene in bed makes it clear that the first shot is to be seen as the product of a subjective and imaginary inner perspective. The film derives its surprise effect by leaving the viewer in uncertainty with regard to the form of reality that he is experiencing, because the mode of cinematic depiction provides no clues. For a moment, this disturbing effect puts the viewer into the situation of a dreamer who does not know that he is dreaming.¹¹⁰

It is the way in which this film opens with the dream that most imitates the way a dream works in real life. Secondly as the framing and composition of the dream and non-dream world are similar the audience cannot detect that this first shot is a dream from the organisation of the scene itself. Finally, the retrospective understanding that we have been watching a dream that comes with the second shot of the man waking up in bed with his wife reinforces the way this film attempts to reproduce the experience of dreaming. For the dreamer does not know that they are dreaming until they wake up: the fact that both the protagonist and the spectator are equally unaware that the first shot is a dream state strengthens the link between them.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p. 93

What is significant about this presentation of the unconscious with regards to later developments in film is that the presentation of the dream is direct, it mimics the way in which a subject experiences their unconscious mental states. These early dream films were made before cinema moved to a system of what Gunning calls “a cinema of narrative integration”. From 1908 onwards a system came into being whereby the development of a narrative was dependent on character motivation and this motivation was clearly and openly displayed from the start of the film.

Following the non-narrativized mode of the cinema of attractions, these films present subjective images as self-contained attractions, of interest in themselves, rather than giving psychological dimensions to an extended narrative.¹¹¹

The development of the cinema of narrative integration after 1908 gave rise to a psychologically motivated character on whose actions the development of the narrative depended. The cinema of attractions prior to 1908 has no such interest in or capability for developed narrative and was instead focused on images of display. When it came to the subject of dreams this display proved to be realistic to a certain degree in that the fantastical which is often the domain of dreams coincided with the interest of cinema at this time: to show off the abilities of the new medium. In the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski an attempt is made to present the unconscious on screen which seems to integrate the authentic portrayal of the unconscious that occurred in the “cinema of attractions” with the use of this presentation of the unconscious as a motivational force within the progression of the narrative of the film itself. As the methods of operation of the unconscious do not lend themselves to a clear-cut presentation, the filmmaker relies on a retrospective explanation of the appearance of the unconscious and the events it inspires. In this way a portrayal of the unconscious that leans towards authenticity (the dreamer does not know he dreams until he wakes up, i.e. he only understands that he has been dreaming retrospectively) can also be successful as a means of character motivation and narrative progression.

¹¹¹ Gunning, Tom. 1994. p. 117.

Narrative in the psycho-killer film

While the dream films of early cinema displayed the unconscious of the protagonist by presenting their dreams on screen, these films were not interested in using this display of the unconscious of the protagonist for narrative purposes. In contrast, the psycho-killer genre places great emphasis on the unconscious of the protagonist as a causal agent for the murderous actions of the protagonist, but it rarely displays the unconscious on screen. The psycho-killer genre has been defined by Andrew Tudor and William Indick. They view it as a specific sub-genre of the horror film.

According to Andrew Tudor there are three types of horror movie disorder: "...the supernatural, science and the human psyche."¹¹² In the third type of horror movie disorder the threat comes from the unconscious of the protagonist.¹¹³ Tudor states that "...horror-movie psychosis is a deep-rooted human malevolence made manifest" which "...trades on our fear of what is hidden within ourselves. In its world, any of us might suddenly be transformed into unpredictable and inexplicable killers."¹¹⁴ The psycho-killer is the main protagonist of this type of horror film. He or she kills as a result of what is hidden within themselves – their unconscious repressed trauma made manifest. Both Tudor and William Indick cite Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) as a significant moment in the development of the psychotic killer character while acknowledging that this character had a variety of ancestors in cinema. Tudor distinguishes between horror films which depict insanity before *Psycho* and horror films which depict psychosis after *Psycho* stating that whilst during the 1960s there was an increase in the number of psychotic killer films released¹¹⁵ that from the mid-1970s onwards "...psychosis becomes the dominant horror-movie vision of insanity – a development closely associated with the distinctively modern emphasis on paranoid horror."¹¹⁶ William Indick notes a relationship between the development of the psychotic killer character and a popular understanding of psychological issues. "The evolution of the psycho killer archetype through the twentieth century parallels film audience's understanding and acceptance

112 Tudor, Andrew. p. 185

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. pp. 185-6

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p. 186

¹¹⁶ Ibid. p. 188

of psychology as a field, and the ability of psychology to provide explorations for people's behaviours and motivations."¹¹⁷ He states that early cinema had monsters or evil men as killers who were motivated by lust and desire. In the late 1930s and early 1940s these characters began to be given greater psychological motivation. These new killers were depicted as mentally disturbed characters.¹¹⁸ In the 1940s the sociopathic gangster killer arrived who killed for success, revenge and survival.

However, while acknowledging the antecedents of the psychotic killer character in film by reference to monsters, evil men, insanity and sociopathic gangsters both Indick and Tudor point to *Psycho* as the film which began the psychotic killer genre proper. Indick states that "...*Psycho* (1960) was a landmark film in regards to the depiction of the psycho killer in film...it certainly began a new trend in the horror/thriller genre."¹¹⁹ While Tudor states that "The single genuinely new development of the sixties is most cogently expressed in the first films of the psychosis tradition, above all in *Psycho* and *Peeping Tom*. These two mark the beginning of the modern psycho-movie."¹²⁰ Indick and Tudor both agree on the factors which made *Psycho* such a landmark film in the development of the psychotic killer genre. They cite the realistic, naturalistic and documentary style and setting of the film which places the character of Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins) and his psychosis firmly in the ordinary, quotidian world in contrast to the rarefied world of madness or the glamorous world of gangsters. The first distinguishing characteristic of Norman as a psychotic killer is that he lives in a world which could just as easily be occupied by the spectator. With reference to *Psycho* and *Peeping Tom* Tudor points out that "They are, rather, naturalistic in the ways in which they establish a framework of 'normality' from which our two psychotics emerge – part of the process of conceptualising insanity as a constant potential in the everyday order of things."¹²¹ In addition to the naturalistic presentation of the world which Norman inhabits Indick and Tudor also point to the appealing character traits which Norman displays which attract the sympathy of the audience. Indick believes that the

¹¹⁷ Indick, William. p. 28

¹¹⁸ Ibid pp. 29-30

¹¹⁹ Ibid. p. 28

¹²⁰ Tudor, Andrew. pp. 191-2

¹²¹ Ibid. p. 193

depiction of Norman as both shy and innocent endears him to the audience initially whilst the murder of Marion (Janet Leigh) causes the audience to transfer their identification from Marion to Norman.¹²² While Tudor acknowledges the appealing elements of Norman's personality as portrayed in the film he offers a more nuanced analysis stating that the focus on the protagonist causes the audience to feel "...discomfort, caught between character traits that attract our sympathy and overt behaviour which undermines it."¹²³ This emphasis on the realistic style and setting of *Psycho* combined with the appealing characteristic traits of Norman mark this film out as a turning point in the development of the horror film in that both these elements firmly place the world of the film within the normal, the ordinary in contrast to the rarefied exotic world of the madman or gangster killer.

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of *Psycho* which sets it apart from other films about crazed killers is the penultimate scene in which the psychiatrist explains Norman's motivation for killing with reference to psychology. Indick and Tudor both cite this scene as having a significant influence on the psychotic killer films which followed. Indick sees *Psycho*'s influence leading to the development of an archetypal serial killer character with multiple personalities in later films. He states that "...movie characters didn't mention anything about multiple personality disorders until Hitchcock put the psychological subtext in front of the frame, in *Psycho*. Since then, it has become rather standard fare for a serial killer to have more than one personality."¹²⁴ He also refers to the character of Norman serving as a template for later killers in horror films¹²⁵ as does Tudor¹²⁶ each referencing the fact that since the 1960s the psychotic killer has become such a staple horror film archetype that it has outgrown the need for a psychological explanation for the killings, rather audience familiarity with the character now presumes a psychological explanation for these killings:

¹²² Indick, William. p. 33

¹²³ Tudor, Andrew. p. 195

¹²⁴ Indick, William. p. 38

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 34

¹²⁶ Tudor, Andrew. p. 196

And now, in the post-modern era following *Psycho* and the many, many films it inspired, the typical psycho killer in movies is a serial killer – a modern day monster, an evil villain – who’s motivations have been explained and illustrated so many times in so many movies, as to make any psychological explanation for the psychotic serial killer’s motives completely redundant and unnecessary. A filmmaker need only point out that a murderer is a serial killer, a “psycho”, and his character is immediately developed. Such is the power of an established screen archetype.¹²⁷

Tudor works through the development of this genre from 1960 onwards establishing a connection between psychosis, violence and repressed sexuality. He begins by noting the connections between sexuality and violence in *Psycho* and *Peeping Tom*: “Our understanding of Mark and Norman is framed by a number of narrative and stylistic references to sexuality, voyeurism, repression and the expression of sexual desire in violence.”¹²⁸ Thus the connection between sexuality, violence and psychosis becomes an interlinked triumvirate in which the exclusion of a specific reference to one of these terms – psychosis – indicates the establishment of the genre rather than the loss of the term. Tudor elaborates his argument by reference to two films *Hands of the Ripper* (Peter Sasdy, 1971) and *Targets* (Peter Bogdanovich, 1967) which represent for him the move from a psychiatric explanation of a psycho-killer’s motivation to an expectation that the audience will posit that explanation without a direct reference in the film. *Hands of the Ripper* he states “...plays cleverly on the ambiguity of candidate explorations, posing a range of possibilities between possession and hysteria, supernature and psyche, and not conclusively committing its narrative to any one of them.”¹²⁹ Therefore, by including a psychological exploration as one of a range of reasons for the psycho-killer’s actions, and at the same time not limiting the cause of this murderous behaviour solely to the psyche of the killer a connection begins between violent acts of murder and a protagonist with a disturbed psyche.¹³⁰ Tudor further develops this point in reference to the 1967 film *Targets*, in which no psychiatric explanation is given for the murderous behaviour of the protagonist, stating that “Normality and psychosis blur together, and what is

¹²⁷ Indick, William. p. 34

¹²⁸ Tudor, Andrew. p. 194

¹²⁹ Ibid. p. 196

¹³⁰ Ibid.

explained, however sketchily, in *Peeping Tom* and *Psycho* is now given no explanation whatsoever. In the movie world heralded by *Targets*, and further developed over the next fifteen years, psychosis becomes an inexplicable but constant constituent of everyday life.”¹³¹ The missing psychiatric explanation is no longer needed as the connection between murderous behaviour and psychosis is now established. This trend continued in the 1970s in which the character of a psychotic killer took centre stage to help create what Tudor calls a “terrorising narrative” “...in which an often unexplained male psychotic terrorises, perhaps rapes and certainly murders an array of young women.”¹³² By the end of the 1970s Tudor states that the psycho-killer film had developed a commercial format which included “...graphic portrayal of violence; insanity conceived as a routine expectation in everyday life; declining efficacy of experts, whether coercive or psychiatric; little or no explanation for psychotic behaviour; violent misogyny as a central element in psychosis; and a narrative structure dominated by the tension requirements of the terrorising narrative.”¹³³ Tudor includes the films *Halloween* (1979) and the *Friday the 13th* series (1980, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 2009) under the category of “terrorising narratives”¹³⁴ arguing that while these films differ from *Psycho* in the level of characterisation they give to their main protagonist that nevertheless a continuum can be drawn from *Psycho* to these later films with regard to the representation of a psychotic killer on film.¹³⁵

Tudor and Indick’s research mark *Psycho* as the starting point in the psycho-killer genre.¹³⁶ They point to the characterisation of Norman as establishing a cinematic template on which all other subsequent psychotic killers are based.¹³⁷ Norman kills as a result of his psychosis. Subsequent psychotic killers are given a similar motivation. Norman’s psychosis is explained in the film as resulting from repression. According to the psychiatrist’s speech at the end of the film Norman

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid. p. 197

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid. p. 198

¹³⁵ Ibid. pp. 205 -7

¹³⁶ Tudor, Andrew. pp. 191-2. Indick, William. p. 28

¹³⁷ Tudor, Andrew. p. 196.

Indick, William. p. 34

suffered a trauma when his mother began a new sexual relationship after his father's death. Blinded by jealousy he killed his mother and her lover and has repressed the knowledge of those events. His symptom of the return of the repressed is murder. The reason why Norman kills is therefore linked to his unconscious – a repressed, unresolved trauma which erupts in the act of murder. *Psycho* makes a strong connection between Norman's repressed trauma and his violent behaviour. Acts, knowledge and desires which are repressed form the working material of the unconscious which constantly seeks expression. In *Psycho* this expression takes the form of violent and murderous behaviour. As the originator of the psycho-killer genre *Psycho* establishes a link between the unconscious of a character and murderous actions. Subsequent psycho-killer films which follow acknowledge and reinforce that link. This gives rise to a cinematic convention whereby an affinity is established between the representation of a character's unconscious on film and the violent and murderous actions of that character. The following section investigates how this convention is established in *Psycho*.

Unconscious motivation and *Psycho*

Psycho's significance in relation to the depiction of the unconscious of a protagonist who is a psychotic killer depends on two factors. Firstly, the apparent lack of motivation for Norman's murderous actions throughout the film. Secondly, the explanation for this motivation given by the psychiatrist at the end of the film by reference to Norman's disturbed psyche. *Psycho* belongs to that group of films in which the viewer gets two films under the same title. It is the same and yet an entirely different film on first and second viewings. On first viewing the film is overtly presented as a variation on the mad woman in the attic story – the audience is led to believe that Norman's cantankerous mother is responsible for the killings, up until the moment Norman's wig falls off as he attacks Lila (Vera Miles). It is this revelation that Norman was the killer all along that makes *Psycho* a different film on second viewing. Armed with this knowledge the second viewing of *Psycho* tells the story of a madman who whilst not confined to the attic is nevertheless caught in a trap of his own making. However, despite knowing who the real killer is on a second viewing of *Psycho* it is no less difficult to identify the motives for Norman's killing.

We are as much in the dark about his motives as we were when we believed Mrs. Bates to be the killer. The question of motivation arises precisely due to the fact that the reasons why Norman kills are not made clear during the course of the film. It is only at the end of the film that a psychological motivation for Norman's actions is applied by the psychiatrist. This explanation gives a retrospective understanding of the reasons why Norman killed on a first viewing of the film. On a second viewing of *Psycho* the psychiatrist's explanation functions to mark Norman as a psychotic killer. This time round the audience is not only aware that it is Norman and not Mrs. Bates who is the killer, they are also aware that Norman's killings are the result of his psychosis. The motivation for Norman's behaviour can only be discovered by reference to his unconscious. The following section examines how his unconscious is referred to in the film.

This reading of *Psycho* will contend that Norman is not consciously aware that he kills. Rather at these moments of fatal violence his unconscious self takes over. This use of the unconscious of the protagonist as an instigator of action, in this case murderous action, an instigator which the character is unaware of has been imitated in subsequent films of the psycho-killer genre and in the films of the directors examined in this thesis¹³⁸. His murders are a symptom of his repression. This repression is two fold and is intrinsically connected to Norman's relationship with his mother. Norman's repression consists not only of his sexual desires but he has also repressed the knowledge that his mother had a sexual relationship with a man who was not his father. Norman represses his sexual desires in order to comply with his mother's definition of being a good son. It is his method of repressing the knowledge that his mother had become sexually active that is particularly important in relation to the unconscious motivation for his actions. Ten years prior to the events we see in the film Norman kills his sexually active mother and her lover. When the film opens she has been replaced by a version that is more acceptable to Norman – the sex-loathing mother. Norman's repression, both of his own sexual desires and of his mother's sexual relationship with another are made manifest, are given a material existence, in

¹³⁸ See for example, *Halloween* (1979), *Identity* (James Mangold, 2003) and *Single White Female* (Alison Jones, 1992)

the character of Mrs. Bates as she is presented in the film. In relation to the subsequent depictions of a character's unconscious, particularly repression, in the later films of Hitchcock and in the films of Kieślowski discussed in subsequent chapters this method of representing a character's unconscious seems literal. It posits a clear oppositional relationship between "the good" or "the normal" Norman whom we meet as proprietor of the Bates Motel and "the bad" or "the abnormal" Norman who needs to transform physically in order for the repressed material of his unconscious to come to the fore.

Within the diegesis of the film it is the psychiatrist's explanation which is presented as the key to understanding Norman's actions. This speech provides details on the relationship between Norman and his mother. The psychiatrist first establishes that Norman was extremely attached to his mother, "the two of them lived as if there was no-one else in the world" and that Norman was already "dangerously disturbed" since the death of his father. The psychiatrist then goes on to reveal that it was Norman who killed his mother and her lover. It is to this act of matricide that the psychiatrist attributes the subsequent split in Norman's psyche, in order to deny this fact to himself Norman 'becomes' his mother. In explaining that it was the "mother side" of Norman who committed the murders the psychiatrist makes it clear that Norman had no knowledge of the act of killing himself. He details how this occurred as follows:

So he began to think and speak for her, give her half his life so to speak at times he could be both personalities, carry on conversations, at other times the mother half took over completely. He was never all Norman, but he was often only mother, and because he was so pathologically jealous of her, he assumed that she was as jealous of him. Therefore, if he felt a strong attraction to any other woman, the mother side of him would go wild. When he met your sister, he was touched by her, aroused by her, he wanted her, that set off the jealous mother and mother killed the girl. Now after the murder Norman returned as if from a deep sleep and like a dutiful son covered up all traces of the crime he was convinced his mother had committed.

According to this explanation for Norman's behaviour the murders he has committed happened when his identity as Norman disappeared and his identity as Mrs. Bates "took over completely". The psychiatrist is suggesting that Norman was entirely

unaware that he had committed these murders “...after the murder Norman returned as if from a deep sleep”. It is this lack of conscious knowledge of his actions which suggests a deeper, unconscious motivation. While the film indicates another personality (Mrs. Bates) as instigating the murders, the reference to Norman returning “as if from a deep sleep” after the killings indicates that Norman is not consciously aware that he kills. His motivation for killing is his unconscious repressed trauma and the psychiatrist’s explanation seems to be allocating this a physical manifestation within the film in the body of Mrs. Bates.

In an article on Anthony Perkins’ performance as Norman Bates Deborah Thomas states that in order for Norman to maintain his own and his mother’s personalities he must believe that his mother is still alive. She states:

I think we must take it as a given that Norman is never consciously aware that his mother is dead. This carries with it as a consequence, however, that he must also have no conscious awareness of his transformations into his mother and back again to himself, but must be in some sort of trance, his behaviour that of an unthinking automaton throughout these off-screen moments, with no memory of them but just a vaguely troubling sense of a series of gaps.¹³⁹

When Thomas describes Norman’s knowledge of his transformation into Mrs. Bates as “a vaguely troubling sense of a series of gaps”¹⁴⁰ she is pointing to the fact that in these moments Norman’s unconscious self takes over from his conscious self.

There are two conflicting desires operating within Norman – the desire to be a good son and a sexual desire for Marion. Norman’s sexual desire for Marion is indicated by his watching her through a peephole in the room behind his office as she undresses prior to taking a shower. This act of voyeurism is an infantilised and controlling approach to the satisfaction of sexual desire. In watching Marion disrobe in the bathroom from the safety of his own room Norman can indulge his sexual desires and fantasies through the distanced act of looking alone. In keeping his distance he might limit his opportunities for sexual satisfaction, but, this loss is compensated for by the fact that in looking only, he also limits the opportunity for

¹³⁹ Thomas, Deborah. “On Being Norman: Performance and Inner Life in Hitchcock’s *Psycho*” *A Hitchcock Reader*. Ed. Marshall Deutelbaum and Leland Poague. 3rd Ed. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. pp. 369-70

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p.370

sexual rejection. Barbara Creed points to the relationship between voyeurism and masturbation in connection with this scene:

Voyeurism is specifically associated with masturbation particularly in relation to male spectatorship and pornographic images of women. The details of the *mise-en-scène* appear to have been arranged to emphasise this connection.¹⁴¹

She goes on to refer to the painting of Susanna and the Elders "...a fictional story set during the Jewish Exile in Babylon"¹⁴², according to Creed this story and hence the painting "...points to man's voyeurism and desire to punish women for her supposed sexual sins".¹⁴³ While Creed makes the connection between Norman's voyeurism and his sexual desires she does not elaborate on the association between voyeurism and masturbation in relation to the character of Norman. The act of masturbation and Norman's voyeurism can be seen to be an indication that his sexual maturity has stopped at an adolescent stage. He watches Marion undress rather than proposition her. In fact from their earlier conversation his shyness and hesitancy can be read as an indication that he is uncomfortable in her presence, that while he desires her he is unaware as to how to act on these desires. Norman's lack of maturity can also be seen in this conversation when he indicates the close relationship he has with Mrs. Bates "A boy's best friend is his mother" and in the emphasis he places on the fact that he is a good son or even a good boy in keeping his deranged mother living with him and not sending her away to live "someplace" as others might.

Norman's sexual desire for Marion conflicts with this other desire to be a good son for his mother. However, in this case the definition of being a good son is directly connected to the repression of sexual acts and perhaps even the repression of sexual desires. For earlier in the film when Norman returns to the house in order to prepare food for Marion we overhear a conversation between him and Mrs. Bates in which it becomes clear that Norman's mother will not consider him to be a good son if he engages in sexual relations with Marion. While Norman insists that his getting

¹⁴¹ Creed, Barbara. *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge, 2007. p.

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¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

food for Marion is just a kindly act “Mother, she’s just a stranger. She’s hungry and it’s raining out”. Mrs. Bates sees a sexual motivation behind it “As if men don’t desire strangers. Oh! I refuse to speak of disgusting things because they disgust me. Do you understand, boy? Go on, go tell her she’ll not be appeasing her ugly appetite with my food or my son. Or do I have to tell her because you don’t have the guts? Huh, boy? Do you have the guts boy?” Here, Mrs. Bates is indicating her belief that a sexual desire for strangers is “disgusting” and while she was willing to overlook the disgusting element of desiring strangers in her own case, as Creed points out, she

...is privately indulging in the very behaviour which she publicly condemns in her son... While she appears to be a harsh moralist, she obviously does not veto sexual passion for herself – only for her son. After all, she has taken a lover¹⁴⁴

she condemns the same desire in her son. For Norman to act on his sexual desires he must disobey his mother an act he seems unwilling to commit. In the battle between satisfying his sexual desires and being a good son to his mother Norman chooses the latter and represses his sexual desires as a consequence.

Along with the repression of his sexual desires Norman has also attempted to repress the knowledge that his mother was a sexually active woman who chose to take a lover thus breaking the close bond that existed between herself and Norman after the death of his father. According to the psychiatrist’s explanation at the end of the film

His mother was a clinging, demanding woman and for years the two of them lived as if there was no-one else in the world. Then she met a man, and it seemed to Norman that she threw him over for this man, now that pushed him over the line and he killed them both:

Norman’s age at this time is also significant in relation to his own sexual maturity. As the murder of Mrs Bates took place ten years prior to the events of the film it seems reasonable to presume that Norman was in his late teenage years at the time when his mother began a sexual relationship with a new man. Thus at the time when

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 145

Norman should have been exploring sexual relationships with others and at the same time coming out from under the influence of his mother the roles were reversed and it was Mrs. Bates who became sexually active at this time not Norman. His mother's sexual relationship with this "stranger" put an end to the previously close bond that had existed between mother and son. Not only did his mother reject this mother/son relationship in favour of a new sexual relationship with a stranger but in doing so she publicly engaged in activities that she prohibited for Norman. She also publicly became a sexual being again and this time it was a sexual relationship with a man who was not Norman's father, instead it was with a man who was a stranger to Norman.

It is Norman's method of repressing the knowledge that his mother had become sexually active with a man who was not his father that is significant in relation to the unconscious motivations for his actions during the film. This is indicated within the film when the psychiatrist states that it was Norman's jealousy of his mother's love for another man that led him to murder them both. If his mother and her lover had remained alive it would have been more difficult for Norman to repress the knowledge of his mother's sexual activity. Rather than the possibly unsuccessful repression of that knowledge Norman chose to repress the possibility of the love affair continuing and he therefore killed both his mother and her lover. However, this extremely effective method of preventing his mother from being sexually active meant that he had now eliminated all of his mother – not just that part of her which he objected to. In bringing his mother's body back from the grave, in treating her body with chemicals to preserve it Norman reanimates only those aspects of her character that he is comfortable with. He brings back *his* version of his mother – and this version is one who has never had a lover. On the contrary the version of Mrs. Bates that Norman reanimates through speaking in her voice is someone with an abhorrence for sex, someone who views sexual desire as "disgusting". Now, as it is Norman who has reanimated his mother, who has brought her back to life so to speak, it is he who now has the upper hand in one significant element of their relationship – he can now speak for his mother, put words into her mouth.

Creed indicates that the Mrs. Bates we hear in the film is the Mrs. Bates who conforms to the living Mrs. Bates. She describes her as the repressing and moral mother who forbade and forbids Norman to act on his sexual desires. By internalising this voice of morality and repression Norman, according to Creed, views his mother's attitude to sex (stating that it is disgusting) as acting as a prohibition on the fulfilment of his own sexual needs and desires. However, there is another way of examining the character of Mrs. Bates as she is presented through the words "she" speaks throughout the film. This is to acknowledge that the words she "speaks" are words which are formulated by Norman. It is Norman who now decides what his mother "says", he chooses her "opinions" and "statements" and "reactions". And it is quite possible as Norman's personality is now so entwined with that of his mother (as indicated again in the psychiatrist's speech) that some elements of her "speech" now articulate Norman's views as well as those of Mrs. Bates. It is possible that along with interpreting Mrs. Bates' "statements" that sexual desire is "disgusting" as operating as a prohibition on Norman acting on his sexual desires that this attitude to sex, attributed to Mrs. Bates is also at the same time a comment by her son on his disgust at her taking a lover. For now that Mrs. Bates can no longer "speak" without the will and whim of her son we cannot only attribute what she "says" to an accurate reproduction of what she most likely would have said when she was alive. Rather we must acknowledge the living Norman's input to her speech as we hear it in the film and allow for the possibility that while speaking as Mrs. Bates, Norman is also speaking his own opinions on her sexual relationship. That is, he is taking revenge on his mother for deserting him for another man by stating that desire is disgusting, although in this case it is Mrs. Bates' desire for her lover that Norman found disgusting. Thus Norman has not only repressed the knowledge that his mother was sexually active, more than this he has killed this mother and her sexual partner, but he has brought back into his life a version of his mother that is acceptable to him – a mother who is not sexually active, in fact, this version of Mrs. Bates abhors sexual activity. Her statement that desire is disgusting operates in two ways: firstly as a statement that Norman has attributed to his mother which indicates as Creed states the moral, repressed side of Mrs. Bates' character, secondly it operates as a statement

that Norman is making as a jealous reaction to his mother taking a lover. By killing the version of his mother who was sexually active and replacing her with a version who abhors sex Norman has taken extreme measures to repress the knowledge that his mother was involved in a sexual relationship. He has killed the sexually active mother and replaced her with the puritanical sex-loathing mother.

However, the version of Mrs. Bates who exists for the duration of the film is someone who comes most strongly to life in reaction to Norman's sexual desire. It is then that she becomes active. When Norman kills he does so whilst inhabiting the persona of his mother, but, not the persona of Mrs. Bates as it existed whilst she was alive, rather, the Mrs. Bates that Norman inhabits as he kills is an amalgam of the mother he knew and lived with while she was alive and the persona he has created for her after her death. This new version of Mrs. Bates who inhabits Norman's home functions as a material or physical representation of Norman's repressed sexual desires. In Norman's conversations with her she articulates both her role as puritanical overbearing mother in forbidding Norman to engage in a sexual relationship and as Norman's own critique of her for engaging in a sexual relationship with a stranger. As mother she forbids sex for Norman as it is disgusting, the same connection with sex and disgust however also articulates Norman's feelings on her relationship with her lover. This version of Mrs. Bates who is in part a creation of Norman functions to repress Norman from acting on his sexual desire. She equates sex with disgust and tells Norman that he must get rid of the object of his desire – in this case, Marion. However, Norman's elaborate repression of his sexual desire is, like all repressions, unsuccessful. The repression must find a way out of the unconscious; it must express itself in the form of a symptom. Norman's symptom is murder. As his desire for Marion is repressed with regards to acting on that desire it finds expression in killing her. To understand Norman's motivations here we must return to his first killing and the reasons why this came about. The first person Norman killed was his mother (in a joint killing with her lover); the psychiatrist tells us he killed her because he was jealous of her new relationship. Norman kills his mother as a result of her becoming sexually active. Sex, according to his mother, is disgusting; it threatens the close bond that has developed between mother and son. If

it were just the case that the introduction of Mrs. Bates' lover threatened the close bond between mother and son we could imagine that the "dangerously disturbed" Norman would have been satisfied with only killing the lover and thus getting rid of the threat to the relationship he had with his mother. With the lover eliminated Norman and Mrs. Bates could return to the close relationship they enjoyed before his arrival. That Norman killed his mother as well as her lover indicates that he did not want to return to his previous relationship with his mother or that he was aware that the mother/son relationship could not return to how it was before as his mother had changed for him. The important question to ask regarding Norman Bates' motivation for action is why did Norman kill his mother? The answer I am proposing here is that Norman killed his mother because she transgressed. She allowed herself to engage in the very type of activity (forming a sexual relationship) which she had denied to Norman.

This characterisation of Norman Bates makes a connection between the activities of his unconscious and his murderous activities. Tudor argues that the development of the psychotic killer intensified in the 1970s and the themes he attributes to this type of film can be seen to exist in *Psycho*. He states:

After 1960...madness becomes psychosis: a secular, dependent and internally articulated threat...What is important is...the fact that these film conceptualise insanity as caused at all, and that they increasingly do so in terms of a specific cluster of ideas.

These ideas do not make much sense as a coherent psychological theory, but...they do invite us to understand horror movie psychosis from a definite vantage point. They constantly allude to a loosely interlinked array of themes: family – or parent-derived repression (classically mother/son); perverse sexuality; male-upon-female voyeurism; a link between violent killing and sexual gratification; and, especially in the eighties, a predator – prey relation between male psychotics and female victims.¹⁴⁵

Based on the psychiatrist's explanation at the end of *Psycho* this section has examined the following elements as being linked to Norman's unconscious in the film – the mother/son relationship, sexual desires, repression and trauma and murder as symptom of the return of the repressed. It is the lengthy psychiatrist's explanation

¹⁴⁵ Tudor, Andrew. p. 57

of Norman's behaviour that gives the key to this film with regards to the motivation for his murderous actions. This section has traced the meanings that this speech opens up for Norman's behaviour, it links the behaviour to Norman's unconscious and in doing so describes the mixture of desire, murder and mother/son relationship that Tudor describes as being part of the template for the psycho-killer genre.

This chapter has examined two types of film in which the unconscious of a protagonist is frequently portrayed: the dream films of early cinema and the psychotic killer film. In their representation of the unconscious as the dream of a character, the dream films of early cinema delight in displaying the experience of a dreamer as they dream on film. These films attempt to replicate the experience of dreaming itself. In taking universal dream topics (flight, wish-fulfilment etc) it is more likely that the audience will relate to the film in a direct manner and this relation gives a sense of authenticity to the portrayal of the unconscious as represented by dreams in these films. *Let Me Dream Again* takes the attempt to reproduce the actual experience of dreaming within the film a step further by withholding any diegetic indication that a dream is taking place until after the dream is finished – for the dreamer does not know that they are dreaming until they wake up. These early films attempt a representation of the operation of the unconscious through the display of the experience of dreaming. The films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski which are examined in this thesis also attempt a representation of the operation of the unconscious as it experienced by the protagonists of their films. However, unlike the dream films of early cinema, these later directors connect this representation of the unconscious of a protagonist to the progression of the narrative of their films. In this way the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski can be also seen to reproduce a structure which is frequently used in the psychotic killer film whereby the actions of the protagonist are influenced by their unconscious, specifically a repressed trauma. In the psychotic killer film however the actions that are motivated by the unconscious of a character are malevolent unlike the equivalently motivated actions in the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski. Nevertheless, there is a similarity between the narrative structure of the psychotic killer film and the films of the directors under discussion in this thesis. This narrative structure is one that withholds a direct

reference to character motivation, often only providing it at the end of the film, as is the case in *Psycho*, *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* when the revelation of the trauma that has been repressed is revealed and a retrospective understanding of the motivation for character action and events is then possible.

Chapter Three: Life Influences

This chapter investigates the levels of interaction that Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski had with psychoanalysis. In particular it examines the social, historical and cultural background of each director in order to put forward the idea that there is something unique in the background of each of these three directors which influenced the types of films they made and the subjects that interested them with particular reference to their common bond of representing the unconscious of a character on screen. I would like to make it clear at the start that it is not the intention of this chapter to perform a biographical reading of each director. Much valuable work has already been accomplished in this field and indeed I draw on it for the current argument, although this aspect of their personal history had not yet been examined. Rather than examine the entire trajectory of their lives in order to relate their existence to their films, this chapter focuses on a particular circumstance in the life of each director, a historic moment through which they lived, the influence of which affected their style of filmmaking. These historic circumstances are different for each director. In chronological order the events which had an impact on each man are as follows: the Surrealist movement in Paris in the 1920s at the time when Buñuel was living in that city, the popularisation of Freudian psychoanalysis in America in the 1940s shortly after Hitchcock moved to Hollywood and the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement in Poland in the 1970s of which Kieślowski was a member.

“Dangerous to Lean In”¹⁴⁶

In 1924 André Breton published the first *Manifesto of Surrealism* in which he defined Surrealism as follows:

Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner – the actual

¹⁴⁶ The original title of *Un Chien Andalou*. Edwards, Gwynne. *A Companion to Luis Buñuel*. Suffolk: Tamesis, 2005. p. 26

functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern.¹⁴⁷

Luis Buñuel moved to Paris in 1925. Initially his creativity found an outlet in poetry; “Dangerous to Lean In”, the original title for *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) was taken from an unpublished collection of his poems.¹⁴⁸ As a poet he rejected traditional literary forms and identified with the literary movement called *ultraismo* which “cast aside sentimentality in favour of detachment and advocated the scientific language of the modern world in preference to the vocabulary of the past”.¹⁴⁹ At first he knew little of the Surrealists, Gwynne Edwards suggests that it was Dalí’s awareness of the importance of the movement that led Buñuel to it.¹⁵⁰ However as a student in Madrid, prior to his move to Paris, he became familiar with the writings of Freud, reading *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in 1921 and was likely to have knowledge of other Freudian concepts as there was a great interest in psychoanalysis at that time amongst his friends and colleagues.¹⁵¹ His involvement in the Surrealist movement and his knowledge of the works of Freud encouraged him to pursue the representation of the unconscious on screen.

In a 1958 essay¹⁵² Buñuel outlines his vision of the possibility of expression that exists in cinema. Specifically he contends that the medium of cinema is particularly well suited to portraying those irrational aspects of life; dreams, emotions and instincts. He states that:

Because of the way it works, the mechanism for producing film images is, of all the means of human expression, the one that is most like the mind of man, or, better still, the one which best imitates the functioning of the mind while dreaming.

¹⁴⁷ Breton, André. *Manifestoes of Surrealism*. Trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane. Michigan: Ann Arbor Paperback, 1972. p. 26

¹⁴⁸ Edwards, Gwynne. 2005. p. 26

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 18

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 23

¹⁵¹ Edwards, Gwynne. *The Discreet Art of Luis Buñuel: A Reading of His Films*. London: Marion Bayers, 1992. p. 16.

¹⁵² Buñuel, Luis. “The Cinema, Instrument of Poetry” *The Shadow and its Shadow: Surrealist Writing on the Cinema*. Ed. Paul Hammond. 3rd ed. San Francisco: City Light Books, 2000. pp.112-6.

He goes on to indicate the attributes particular to cinema which make the medium most suitable for a portrayal of the irrational:

...time and space become flexible, contract and stretch at will, chronological order and relative values of duration no longer correspond to reality; cyclical action may elapse in a few minutes or in several centuries; the movements speed up; the time lags.¹⁵³

This description of the ability of cinema to expand and compress time, which Bunuel indicates is the reason the medium is so well suited to portraying “the functioning of the mind while dreaming”, shows an awareness of the capability of cinema to represent the unconscious. It is this interest in using film to explore the irrational that contributes to the portrayal of the unconscious in his films. Later in this essay he is more explicit about the relationship between cinema and the unconscious stating that: “The cinema seems to have been invented in order to express the subconscious life”.¹⁵⁴ Here he links the particular attributes of the medium of film with the particular topics and themes that interest him as a creative artist. His interest in displaying dreams and irrational actions go back to his first film in 1929.

If cinema was the medium which best suited Buñuel’s creative interest in mystery, the irrational, and the unconscious, the Surrealist movement initially gave him a format within which these interests were shared by other artists. Robert Short suggests that before he became part of this movement Buñuel was “

already practicing instinctive forms of irrational expression, Surrealism came like a recognition rather than a discovery. Buñuel came to treasure Surrealism because...it respected the essential mystery at the heart of things.¹⁵⁵

Both Short and Edwards acknowledge that Buñuel had an interest in the irrational before he became a member of the Surrealist group and they note the importance of the notion of freedom to Buñuel.¹⁵⁶ Edwards in particular links this to a desire to be

¹⁵³ Ibid. p. 114

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 115

¹⁵⁵ Short, Robert. *The Age of Gold: Dali, Buñuel, Artaud: Surrealist Cinema*. London: Solar Books, 2008. p.

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¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

free of the established norms of society and further connects the significance of freedom for Buñuel with his interest in the unconscious and the Surrealist movement.

Buñuel's concern with freedom cannot be divorced from his preoccupation with Surrealism in the widest sense. His deep fascination with the instinctive and the irrational, evident before his involvement with the official Paris Surrealist group and a constant feature of his work after his departure from it, is a complex matter – attributable in part to temperament, in part to cultural background – but it is easily explained by Buñuel's beliefs that in the process of dreaming or responding to unconscious and instinctive impulses man is relatively, if not entirely free.¹⁵⁷

Buñuel himself confirms this predisposition towards Surrealist thought in his autobiography where he states that Surrealism was “a kind of call heard by certain people everywhere...who, unknown to one another, were already practicing instinctive forms of irrational expression”.¹⁵⁸ In the same volume he states that he was attracted to Surrealism as it was a form of revolution against society, a moral system based on rejecting existing values.¹⁵⁹

The theoretical writings of Freud, the principles of the Surrealist movement and Buñuel's impulse towards a version of freedom which rails against the established norms of society are all influences which can be seen to operate in *Un Chien Andalou*. In another volume of biographical writings Buñuel himself makes this connection when writing about this film. He states:

In the film are amalgamated the aesthetics of surrealism with Freudian discoveries. It answered the general principle of that school, which defines Surrealism as “an unconscious psychic automatism, able to return to the mind its real function, outside of all control exercised by reason, morality, or aesthetics”. Although I availed myself of oneiric elements the film is not the description of a dream. On the contrary, the environment and characters are of a realistic type. Its fundamental difference from other films consists in the fact that the characters function animated by impulses, the primal sources of which are confused with those of irrationalism, which, in turn, are those of poetry. At times these characters react enigmatically, insofar as a pathological psychic complex can be enigmatic. The film is directed at the

Edwards, Gwynne. *The Discreet Art of Luis Buñuel: A Reading of His Films*. London: Marion Bayers, 1992. p. 274

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Buñuel, Luis. *My Last Breath*. Trans. Abigail Israel. London: Vintage, 2003. p. 105

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

unconscious feelings of man, and therefore is of universal value, although it may seem disagreeable to certain groups of society which are sustained by puritanical moral principles.¹⁶⁰

While Buñuel did not remain a member of the Surrealist group, the principles of Surrealism continued to influence all the films he subsequently made. The significance of this statement about *Un Chien Andalou* is the fact that it directly refers to both the writings of Freud and to a reaction against bourgeois morality as equally important elements within the film.

Psychoanalysis American Style

Hitchcock's three films which take psychoanalysis as a theme are *Spellbound* (1945), *Psycho* (1960) and *Marnie* (1964). The first of these, *Spellbound*, was made only a few years after Hitchcock's move to America at a time when that country had reached the "high point" of the popularisation of psychoanalysis according to Nathan J. Hale.¹⁶¹ Not only was this film made at the zenith of popular interest in and knowledge of psychoanalysis, it was also produced by David O. Selznick. Selznick had just finished making *Since You Went Away* (John Cromwell, 1944) on the topic of psychoanalysis and had recently started analysis with May Romm, a "Freudian who made a speciality of treating celebrities¹⁶²" and who was hired to advise on the script of *Spellbound*. This section focuses on the period of the early 1940s, the time when Hitchcock first lived in America and absorbed this culture. It is also the period when he first started working with Selznick and others¹⁶³ who were familiar with psychoanalysis from their own therapeutic sessions. While Hitchcock did not undergo analysis himself there is no doubt that this point in his career he was aware of the commercial potential of a film about psychoanalysis:

You would have to make a distinction...between psychological films and psychoanalytical films. The latter, I think, can be dismissed as a passing phase. It probably is true that the war and the world's general emotional

¹⁶⁰ Buñuel, Luis. *An Unspeakable Betrayal: Selected Writings of Luis Buñuel*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. pp. 250-1

¹⁶¹ Hale, Nathan G. *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917-1985*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. p. 278

¹⁶² McGilligan, Patrick. *Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light*. Chichester: Wiley, 2003. p. 356

¹⁶³ Ben Hecht, scriptwriter on *Spellbound* and Hitchcock's *Notorious* (1946) was also undergoing analysis at this time. *Ibid* p. 355.

upset have made the public more receptive to these explorations of the subconscious. But the run on films of this sort is due most likely to good old commercial Hollywood. Our business always moves in waves and the psychoanalytical film seems capital at the moment.¹⁶⁴

Unlike Buñuel's involvement with the Surrealist movement, Alfred Hitchcock left no concrete evidence of his interest or otherwise in psychoanalysis. In fact Leonard Leff's description of Hitchcock as being "sceptical of psychoanalysis"¹⁶⁵ could be a reasonably accurate description of the relationship Hitchcock had with psychoanalysis. Patrick McGilligan seems to confirm this view in his biography of Hitchcock, stating that while Hitchcock had read Freud in the 1920s and was familiar with the interpretation of symbols and dreams..."he didn't take the subconscious too seriously, and in his private life studiously avoided doctors of the mind."¹⁶⁶ For despite a long public career, with many television and printed media interviews, there is little to indicate either an affinity for or an opposition to this therapeutic method. However, scepticism itself indicates knowledge, one cannot be sceptical of something that one is unaware of and there is no doubt that the America Hitchcock moved to in 1939 was awash with knowledge of psychoanalysis. This section describes the popularisation of psychoanalysis in the United States from the 1940s to the 1960s with particular reference to the embracing of psychoanalysis by writers, actors and directors in Hollywood during the early 1940s. While Hitchcock might not have succumbed to the charms of psychoanalysis his initial period in America coincided with the popularisation of this type of analysis and as a director of popular, mass audience films he often turned to psychoanalysis for the subject of his films.

Nathan G. Hale attributes the popularisation of psychoanalysis in America in the 1940s to the perceived success of that therapy in treating what he calls "the war neuroses":

¹⁶⁴ Alfred Hitchcock. Interview by Frank S. Nugent. *New York Times*, 3rd November, 1946, Sunday Magazine Section. 12-13, 63-64. *Alfred Hitchcock Interviews*. Ed. Sidney Gottlieb. Jackson: University of Mississippi, 2003. p.21

¹⁶⁵ Leff, Leonard. *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood*. Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1987. p. 117

¹⁶⁶ McGilligan, Patrick. p. 345

During and after World War II, the wedding of psychoanalysis and psychiatry was celebrated in the cure of the war neuroses and the triumphs of early psychosomatic medicine.¹⁶⁷

In particular he refers to articles in popular magazines such as *Life* and *Time* in which the traumas of soldiers returned from World War II are treated by psychoanalysis:

...the healing effects of the recall and catharsis of traumatic experiences, the importance and relevance of dreams, the benign and powerful role of the therapist, and above all the unshakably scientific standing of psychoanalytic conclusions were repeated time and again.¹⁶⁸

Hale suggests that popular writing on the treatment of war neuroses by psychoanalysis provided a comforting narrative regarding returning soldiers who did not adhere to the heroic stereotype:

Popularizers, medical and journalistic, established saving stereotypes to deal with the unappealing psychoneurotic, and these crystallised at the high point of popularisation of the war neuroses in 1944...Anyone might become a psychoneurotic patient, and everyone, even the strongest, had his breaking point. Because of the special horrors of modern warfare, that breaking point could be reached more quickly than ever before.¹⁶⁹

These stories of soldiers dealing with the traumatic effects of battle and their treatment by psychoanalysis brought this therapy to the forefront of the public domain. Even more than this, it established a benign attitude towards psychoanalysis as the treatment which cured these alternative heroic Americans:

If the patient was invariably heroic and not crazy, the psychiatrist was warmly sympathetic, understanding, charismatic, and possessed of uncanny insight...In popular accounts, with monotonous regularity, treatment was followed by success.¹⁷⁰

In addition to portraying psychoanalysts in a sympathetic light, popular magazine articles about psychoanalysis also made reference to elements of this therapy such as

¹⁶⁷ Hale, Nathan G. p. 277

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 278

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. pp. 278-80.

catharsis and dream analysis¹⁷¹ and “the psychological origins of disease in early childhood emotions.”¹⁷² Hale indicates a peak of popularisation of psychoanalysis from the late 1940s to the late 1950s stating that there was a “mushroom growth”¹⁷³ in psychoanalysis in America by 1947. “Then, a spate of widely popularised books about Freud and psychoanalysis began around 1950.”¹⁷⁴ Finally, he describes the popular perception and knowledge of psychoanalysis in America in the 1950s as follows:

The euphoria reached a peak during the celebrations of Freud’s 100th anniversary in 1956 and the appearance of Ernest Jones’s three-volume study of Freud which was widely reviewed as one of the world’s great biographies. Gradually, psychoanalysis became identified with the “establishment” in psychiatry and society, reconciled with conventional moral and religious values and sexual conventions.¹⁷⁵

This public knowledge and awareness of psychoanalysis beginning in the 1940s opened the door for the production of films on this topic, particularly films which were aimed at a general audience, the same audience who purchased *Time* and *Life* magazines. While Hitchcock’s first film on the topic of psychoanalysis – *Spellbound* – was released in 1945 there were other films on this subject in a variety of genres released before this date. *Carefree* (Mark Sandrich, 1938) starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers was released in 1938, *Blind Alley* (Charles Vidor, 1939) starring Ralph Bellamy a year later, *The Flame Within* (Edmund Goulding, 1935) from 1935 starring Maureen O’Sullivan and *In Person* (William A. Seiter, 1935) from the same year starring Ginger Rogers. The fact that such popular genres as the musical used psychoanalysis as a plot device and that these films featured many of the stars of the period indicated how psychoanalysis as a subject for film had become accepted by audiences. In 1939 Hitchcock moved to a country in which psychoanalysis had already become part of popular culture. As a director of films for mass audiences it is

¹⁷¹ Ibid. pp. 278-9.

¹⁷² Ibid. p. 283.

¹⁷³ Ibid. p. 284.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 284

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 277

not surprising that he chose psychoanalysis as a topic for one of the earliest films he made in America.

David O. Selznick produced Hitchcock's *Spellbound* and Ben Hecht was one of the scriptwriters. Both were supporters of psychoanalysis and were undergoing analysis as were many other studio personnel at that time. Hitchcock's first film in America – *Rebecca* (1940) was produced by Selznick and they made two other films together in the 1940s – *Notorious* (1946), also scripted by Hecht and *The Paradine Case* (1947). In an interview with Francois Truffaut Hitchcock states that he “wanted to...turn out the first picture on psychoanalysis”¹⁷⁶, at the same time he also indicates the appeal the film had to a mainstream audience in the same interview “it's just another manhunt story wrapped up in pseudo-psychoanalysis”.¹⁷⁷ Patrick Gilligan, focusing on the last statement, suggests that both Hitchcock and Hecht were aware of the mass appeal of the film during the writing process:

They knew Hollywood preferred box office to art and they didn't kid themselves: in order to satisfy Selznick, *The House of Dr. Edwardes*¹⁷⁸ would have to strike a plausible psychiatric pose – a pose that both recognised as, in Hitchcock's phrase, “pseudo-psychoanalysis” – but the bottom line was creating a mystery with a pair of sexy stars that would clean up at the box office.¹⁷⁹

Hitchcock's subsequent films on the topic of psychoanalysis: *Psycho* and *Marnie* also took this dual approach, they were films aimed at a mass audience and at the same time they depict an engagement with psychoanalysis that while popular is nonetheless not dismissive.

The “inner life” and the unconscious

This section examines Kieślowski's involvement with the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement and argues that the events of this period had a direct impact on the type of film he subsequently made. It contends that it was as a result of his involvement in this movement that Kieślowski began to develop a method of filmmaking that led to the depiction of the protagonist's unconscious in his later films. It is significant that

¹⁷⁶ Truffaut, François. p. 163

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 165

¹⁷⁸ This was the working title of *Spellbound*.

¹⁷⁹ McGilligan, Patrick. p. 354

it was during this period that Kieślowski, a well-known documentary filmmaker, abandoned the documentary format and moved to the fiction film.¹⁸⁰ Part of the reason for this change was a frustration with the ability of the documentary format to show what he calls the “inner life” on screen and his inability to persuade the real subjects of his documentaries to reveal their most intimate thoughts and feelings on camera.

The four films made by Kieślowski during the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period: *The Scar* (1976), *The Calm* (1976), *Camera Buff* (1979), and *Blind Chance* (1981) are experimental precursors to his methods of portraying the unconscious of a character in his later films. These four films owe a debt to the observational style of his documentaries with settings that reflect the working class and middle class subjects of his documentaries. However, in these films Kieślowski begins to experiment with presenting the inner life of his characters. These four films present characters with moral dilemmas as opposed to the more practical dilemmas of the subjects of his documentaries and it is the character’s reactions to these moral dilemmas that drives the narrative of these films forward. These narratives progress due to the character’s moral reasoning; they are films which are strongly centred on a single protagonist. Most significant of all the experimental developments in this phase of his career are those which occur at the beginning of the films *Camera Buff* and *Blind Chance* and which are subsequently used as a method of representing the unconscious of a character in his later films. This method which is used as an opening sequence in *Camera Buff* and *Blind Chance* is a presentation of a scene without context or forewarning. It is only subsequently that events in this initial scene are given context and meaning. This method of a retrospective understanding of images imitates how the unconscious presents itself to the conscious mind and it is a method that Kieślowski draws on to represent the unconscious of a character in his later films.

The term Cinema of Moral Anxiety originated with the filmmaker Janusz Kijowski. Variations on this term include Cinema of Moral Concern, Cinema of Moral Unrest and Cinema of Moral Dissent.¹⁸¹ Marek Haltof also suggests the

¹⁸⁰ From 1969 to 1980 he made twenty-two documentaries and six fiction films. From 1981 to the end of his career in 1984 he made one documentary and nineteen fiction films.

¹⁸¹ Haltof, Marek. 2002. p. 147.

Cinema of Distrust as an alternative.¹⁸² Paul Coates¹⁸³ and Joseph Kickasola¹⁸⁴ both use the variation Cinema of Moral Anxiety as does Kieślowski.¹⁸⁵ As Coates, Kickasola and Haltof have the largest body of work on Kieślowski I have gone with the majority opinion in the use of this term. Kieślowski credits Kijowski with coming up with the term¹⁸⁶ and Haltof states that this is acknowledged by fellow filmmakers including Feliks Falk.¹⁸⁷ The term refers both to a group of films made in Poland between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s and the collective group of filmmakers who were responsible for bringing these films to fruition. As with the title of this movement there are disagreements with regard to its duration. Kieślowski states 1974 to 1980.¹⁸⁸ Haltof states 1976 to 1981.¹⁸⁹ Coates refers to the movement in relationship to state censorship and does not give dates.¹⁹⁰ While Kickasola acknowledging the disparity of opinions states late 1970s to 1981.¹⁹¹ As this chapter is concerned with the impact of the movement on Kieślowski's development as a filmmaker rather than an analysis of the movement itself I have used the broadest possible time span. The collaborative and self-aware nature of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety Movement has been expressed by Kieślowski¹⁹² and Agnieszka Holland.¹⁹³ As stated above the term was coined by a filmmaker and first used in public by another filmmaker: Andrzej Wajda in 1979.¹⁹⁴ This indicates that it was a filmmaker's movement rather than a critical designation retrospectively applied to the films. Marek Haltof describes the content of these films as follows:

This series of contemporary realistic films centres around the conflict between the state and the individual, and examines the massive gap between the “progressive” postulates and their implementation. Due to state censorship the system is not attacked directly; the films target its institutions

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Coates, Paul. 1999. p.7, 2005. p. 188.

¹⁸⁴ Kickasola, Joseph. p. 12.

¹⁸⁵ Stok, Danusia, ed. p. 41.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Haltof, Marek. 2002. p. 147.

¹⁸⁸ Stok, Danusia, ed. p. 41.

¹⁸⁹ Haltof, Marek. 2002. p. 147.

¹⁹⁰ Coates, Paul. , 2005. pp. 74-116.

¹⁹¹ Kickasola, Joseph.. p. 13.

¹⁹² Stok, Danusia, ed. p. 41.

¹⁹³ Haltof, Marek. 2002. p. 147.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

and functionaries, and focus on corruption and social maladies. The mechanisms of manipulation and indoctrination are examined on a metaphorical level. These films also portray the emergence of the arrogant communist elites, hypocrisy, conformity, and other social and political effects of the communist system. Often set in provincial Poland (perhaps to indicate that these problems are far from the centre), they provide thinly veiled allusions to the political and social present.¹⁹⁵

While Joseph Kickasola indicates the tone of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety films in this statement:

The title refers to a general anxiety or unrest over Poland's loss of its cultural, moral, and philosophical foundation. They should not be taken to mean any dogmatic or overtly clerical call for a codified morality, but rather a concern for a more general, unifying philosophical and moral vision among the Polish people, largely lost to the totalitarian state.¹⁹⁶

Of the four films made by Kieślowski during the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period *Camera Buff* was the most successful. It won the main prize at the Moscow Film Festival and was well received in Poland and abroad, alerting a non-Polish audience to Kieślowski's films for the first time. It may seem surprising that a film which criticised the ruling regime achieved such success however it must be remembered that the films of this movement were not openly critical of the regime itself. Part of their method of being oppositional was to show what was not typically shown on film: the impact of the regimes policies on the life of the ordinary citizen. Jerzy Stuhr, the actor who plays Filip in *Camera Buff* describes this aspect of the film as follows:

It was a film that people could actually identify with. He was just a simple man; he was dealing with trade and business in the film, in a state owned company, so he was an average person. He was showing the problems that people face on a daily basis, everywhere, at work, at home. It could be seen in many areas of that life in Poland; someone wanted to go and have a mountain hiking club or a sports club and then he became...dependant on the authorities. The links were starting, created, and, because the authorities were deciding whether he was going to have his club or not, he needed permission from the authorities and the authorities gave money for that. So it was just a film for an average person, who on one side the film wanted to show how to realise your dreams, your efforts, and then on the other side,

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 148

¹⁹⁶ Kickasola, Joseph.. pp.12-3

how to become independent from the authorities. And that there was a warning in the film that there is not a thing as a free lunch; there is a price to be paid for everything. For you being active you have to pay. But at the end it's worth it, it's worth to be active, and that was our life, that was the reality of the time.¹⁹⁷

Paul Coates states that the films of this movement “successfully combined metaphor and transparency”.¹⁹⁸ He compares them to the Edgar Allan Poe short story “The Purloined Letter” stating that they operate under the same premise that concealment is best done out in the open, that the metaphors are concealed beneath realism.

Camera Buff constructs an intricate story about the moral struggles of a man within a socialist system. It also at the same time depicts the camaraderie and fellowship of life in a factory and the support that the factory gives to its various social clubs.

Derek Malcolm makes the following reference to *Camera Buff*'s unlikely achievement of the main award at the Moscow film festival:

How it got its Moscow festival award I don't know, but we must assume the mugwumps on the jury misread it. Looked at from the West it is a brave effort for 1979 and, besides that, a more than passable comic treatise not only on pre-Solidarity Polish society but on the tricky art of film-making itself.¹⁹⁹

However it is important to remember that the political aspect of these films was not overtly declared, their political power lay in the fact that they attempted to depict the everyday reality of life in Poland at that time²⁰⁰ and in the absence of this reality on screen to date the very act of showing this reality lent these films an oppositional slant. There was a shared experience of life that existed between the director and the audience that of frustration not only with the communist regime and its economic disasters but with the way in which the real state of society was not portrayed in any

¹⁹⁷ Jerzy Stuhr. Personal Interview by Veronica Johnson. 10th November, 2006.

¹⁹⁸ Coates, Paul. 2005. p. 94

¹⁹⁹ Malcolm, Derek. Rev. of *Camera Buff*, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski. *The Guardian* 24th December 1981.

²⁰⁰ While everyday reality was depicted on screen in this era before the advent of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety films it is fair to say that the desire of these filmmakers to depict their version of everyday reality and the contemporary audience's embracing of these films on that account indicates that the representation of everyday reality on screen prior to the films of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety left a lot to be desired.

official media. The filmmakers and the audience wanted to see the same thing on screen: life as it was actually experienced.

By 1973 Kieślowski had directed thirteen of the twenty-three documentaries he would make in his career. In the period 1973 to 1980 the time of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety Movement he made nine documentaries and six fiction films and in the period immediately following the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period from 1981 until the end of his career in 1994 he made nineteen fiction films and just one documentary. The two significant dates, 1973, when he directed his first fiction film, *Pedestrian Subway* a half-hour drama for television, and 1981, when with one exception,²⁰¹ he produced only fiction films roughly coincide with the dates of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period. It is during this period then that Kieślowski significantly altered the form of his cinematic expression from factual to fiction. Kieślowski himself gives three different reasons for this change in format. The most significant reason in relation to his later portrayal of the unconscious of a character on screen relates to his frustration with the inability (as he saw it) of the documentary format to get close to its subject. However, there are other reasons for this change all of which are articulated in the following passage. Here Kieślowski begins by relating the confiscation by the police of footage from his documentary film *Station* (1980). While he initially believed the police had commandeered the footage due to his filming something “politically improper”²⁰² it turned out that they believed he might have inadvertently filmed material that would help them solve a murder. Although this was not the case, the episode deeply affected Kieślowski and seems to have been a deciding factor in his move from documentary to fiction films. Beginning with his reaction to this episode he then moves from this factual account of his reluctance to continue making documentaries to more artistic and moral reasons as follows:

But what did I realise at that moment? That, like it or not, independently of my intentions or will, I found myself in the situation of an informer or someone who gives information to the police – which I never wanted to do. They’d simply confiscated the material and that was it. I had no say in it...Right, so we didn’t film the girl. But if we had, by chance?....I’d have

²⁰¹ The documentary *Seven Days a Week* (1988) made as part of a cycle of films about various cities by a number of different directors.

²⁰²Stok, Danusia, ed. p. 81

become a police collaborator. And that was the moment I realised that I didn't want to make any more documentaries...Not everything can be described. That's the documentary's great problem. It catches itself as if in its own trap. The closer it wants to get to somebody, the more that person shuts him or herself off from it. And that's perfectly natural. It can't be helped. If I'm making a film about love, I can't go into a bedroom if real people are making love there. If I'm making a film about death, I can't film somebody who's dying because it's such an intimate experience that the person shouldn't be disturbed. And I noticed, when making documentaries, that the closer I wanted to get to an individual, the more the subjects which interested me shut themselves off.

That's probably why I changed to features. There's no problem there. I need a couple to make love in bed, that's fine...Somebody's supposed to die. That's fine. In a minute, he'll get up again. And so on. I can even buy some glycerine, put some drops in her eyes and the actress will cry. I managed to photograph some real tears several times. It's something completely different. But now I've got glycerine. I'm frightened of those real tears. In fact, I don't know whether I've got the right to photograph them. At such times I feel like somebody who's found himself in a realm which is, in fact, out of bounds. That's the main reason why I escaped from documentaries.²⁰³

There are three reasons given in this statement for Kieślowski's decision to give up the documentary format. Firstly, he didn't want to be a police informant, no matter how inadvertently. Secondly, he expresses frustration with the inability of the documentary format to describe everything and thirdly he is uneasy about the public exposure the subjects of his documentaries subsequently receive. The first reason, his not wanting, no matter how unknowingly, to have his footage used by the police for information purposes, must be understood in the broader context of his involvement in the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement and that movement's status as a group which was critical of the state. Jerzy Stuhr describes the movement's status at this time:

The intelligentsia circles, you could feel they're getting into power...and the cinema in those circles that were against the authorities were leading this opposition, were leading the efforts. People expected Zanussi and Kieślowski to stand strong and to lead the voice, to stay against the moral losses that were experienced, not the economic ones, it was the moral ones.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Ibid. pp. 81-6

²⁰⁴ Jerzy Stuhr. Personal Interview. 10th November, 2006.

In this light Kiesłowski's statement that he didn't want to be a police collaborator can be understood to mean that he didn't want his films to be of any benefit to the state, even if that benefit was as non-political as his footage aiding the capture of a murderer. Kiesłowski's stance is strongly connected to the type of films he made and to his view of the role of the filmmaker in Polish society. In his role as a documentary filmmaker he sets his films up as being artistically and morally opposed to the way in which the Polish State represented itself to its own citizens. In speaking of his 1971 documentary *Workers '71* he states:

At that time, I was interested in everything that could be described by the documentary film camera. There was a necessity, a need – which was very exciting for us – to describe the world. The Communist world had described how it should be and not how it really was. We – there were a lot of us – tried to describe this world and it was fascinating to describe something which hadn't been described yet. It's a feeling of bringing something to life, because it is a bit like that. If something hasn't been described, then it doesn't officially exist. So that if we start describing it, we bring it to life.²⁰⁵

This particular film (*Workers '71*) consists of a series of interviews with workers who had taken part in strikes in 1970.²⁰⁶ He frequently refers to this belief in the role of the documentary filmmaker, for example he gives the same reasons for his motivation to make *Curriculum Vitae* (1975)²⁰⁷ again stating the importance of describing something in order for it to come into existence, and when talking of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement he states:

We were all, as it were, in a group which shared the feeling that we could do something together, that we positively had to do something together, and that in such a group we'd have some sort of power. This was true considering the circumstances in Poland at this time. A group like that was necessary.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵ Stok, Danusia, ed. pp.54-5

²⁰⁶ Food prices rose by up to 20% in Christmas week promoting demonstrations and strikes, particularly in the shipyards of Szczecin, Gdynia and Gdansk. Militiamen fired on workers and the Party's headquarters were attacked. Forty-five people were killed. As a result Party Secretary Gomulka was forced to resign and was replaced by Gierek. Norman Davies. *God's Playground: A History of Poland*. Volume Two: 1795 to the Present. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. pp. 442-474

²⁰⁷ Stok, Danusia, ed. p. 58

²⁰⁸ Ibid. p.41

This notion of the artist as commentator is an established tradition in Poland where it is understood that all artists have a duty in their work to comment on current events. Analysts of Polish film as well as filmmakers themselves refer to this phenomenon. Paul Coates calls it “the long-standing unwritten contract between them (the audience) and artists unofficially commissioned to speak of public affairs, *res publica*, not their own personal ones”.²⁰⁹ Tadeusz Sobolewski describes artists as traditionally viewed by critics “as spokesmen for the community, promulgators of ideas, prophets pointing out the way to others”²¹⁰ In viewing his documentaries as films which described a world that officially did not exist Kieślowski takes on the traditional role of the artist in Poland. His documentaries become oppositional films shining a light on aspects of life that the socialist regime would rather have kept hidden. This traditional role of the artist as spokesperson for a nation was given greater significance during the political upheavals of the 1970s.²¹¹ In speaking of the period of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement both Kieślowski and Krzysztof Zanussi indicate how that traditional role of the artist as a commentator on public affairs intensified in this period. In an interview with *The Guardian* newspaper Kieślowski states:

You must understand that in Poland artists were thought of as leaders. As someone who shows us how to live. People here had the feeling that the artists were on their side. During that horrible communist time we had a very privileged position.²¹²

Zanussi also accepts this version of the role of the artist stating in a 1980 interview:

²⁰⁹ Coates, Paul. 1999. P.3

²¹⁰ Sobolewski, Tadeusz.. p.19

²¹¹ While Girek’s first years in power (1971-1973) saw an increase in wages and an easing of censorship this was not to last. The mid 1970s brought recession in part as a result of the international oil crisis, aid sought from the USSR was not forthcoming and the government increased food prices by 60% in June 1976. Riots forced the government to back down. This year also saw the establishment of the Workers Defense Committee (KOR), and increased opposition from the Catholic Intelligentsia and the Flying University in response to an amendment to the constitution which enshrined the Party as the ‘Guardian of the State’ and legalised the ‘alliance with the USSR’, thus making any future attempt to separate the State from the Party unconstitutional. Norman Davies. *God’s Playground: A History of Poland*. Volume Two: 1795 to the Present. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. p. 442-47

²¹² Kieślowski, Krzysztof. Interview. “A Free Market which is Costing Artists Dear”. By Elaine Attais and Albert Hunt. *The Guardian*. 7th January 1992

The function of the artist is to encourage ferment... We do not accept the world as it is, we must *want* to change it. If we are content with the world, it is like a betrayal of ideals. The world is far from beautiful. We must not accept this.²¹³

As the role of the artist intensified during this period, so too did the demands of the audience for films which would refer to the political and cultural situation in Poland as it was experienced by the majority. Tadeusz Lubelski,²¹⁴ Marek Haltof²¹⁵ and Janina Falkowska²¹⁶ write of the tendency of the Polish film audience at this time to perform an Aesopian reading, looking for references in films to aspects of their lives which were not officially acknowledged and also for indications that films and filmmakers were critical of the regime. In the 1970s then audiences demanded, and filmmakers produced, films which represented the unofficial version of Polish life. It is this relationship or dialogue between audience and filmmaker that had a great effect on Kieślowski and as this relationship is to the forefront at a time when Kieślowski is moving from the documentary to the fiction film format it is not unlikely that audience support for his fiction films encouraged him to continue to experiment in this direction. This intensified audience/filmmaker relationship was supplemented by the sense of common bond amongst filmmakers of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement. Agnieszka Holland describes this sense of community as follows:

I know that his was the formation created thanks to a certain generational experience – the meeting of people sharing a similar sensibility and a strong need to receive feedback from the audience. This was not the film criticism that invented ‘moral concern’... This phenomenon was not artificial; it truly existed on the basis of ‘social request’. It was created by the viewers.²¹⁷

At that time Kieślowski was working for the TOR film unit which was headed by Krzysztof Zanussi. Each film unit in Poland was autonomous gathering together

²¹³ Zanussi, Krzysztof. Interview. “Polish Film as Prophecy” By David A. Andelman. *New York Times*. 28th September 28th 1980.

²¹⁴ Lubelski, Tadeusz. “From *Personnel* to *No End*: Kieślowski’s Political Feature Films” *Lucid Dreams: The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski*. Ed. Paul Coates Wiltshire: Flick Books, 1999 p.61

²¹⁵ Haltof, Marek. *Polish National Cinema*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2002. p.147

²¹⁶ Falkowska, Janina. ““The Political” in the Films of Andrzej Wajda and Krzysztof Kieślowski.” *Cinema Journal* 34.2 (1995). p.41

²¹⁷ Haltof, Marek. 2002. p.147

directors, producers, scriptwriters, cinematographers etc. While each individual film was made by a particular crew drawn from the staff of the unit there were ways in which the unit worked overall as a collective. Firstly film professionals were drawn to the film unit which best suited their sensibilities, in this way directors with the same aims belonged to the same unit, they viewed each others films before they were released and there was a constant stream of feedback and support from likeminded professional colleagues:

We used to assess each other's scripts in Poland. That was during the wonderful period when there was a group of us who were close friends. That was during the period of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety in Poland. We were friends – Agnieszka Holland, Wojtek Marczewski, Krzysztof Zanussi, Edek Żebrowski, Feliks Falk, Janusz Kijowski, too, and Andrzej Wajda – who all had the feeling that we were giving each other something....We'd tell each other our ideas. We'd discuss the casting, all sorts of solutions and so on. So the script would be written by me, but it had a mass of authors; a lot of people gave me ideas....

We'd all show each other films before they were edited or in very rough cuts. This habit has remained with me to this day....But to this day, in fact, I discuss every script with Edek Żebrowski or Agnieszka Holland. With the three new films, *Three Colours (Barwy)*, which I wrote together with Piesiewicz....They agreed to be my script advisers and were paid for it.²¹⁸

The sense of community that Kieślowski experienced during this time shaped the rest of his career. From this point onwards he took a collaborative approach to filmmaking, seeking out the same composers, cinematographers and scriptwriter to work with again and again.²¹⁹ He frequently gave credit to actors and colleagues for their work on his script and more importantly, particularly with the *Decalogue* and the *Three Colours Trilogy*, he allocated specific cinematographers based on their ability to create the look that he wanted for a specific film:

²¹⁸ Stok, Danusia, ed. p. 104.

²¹⁹ Zbigniew Preisner composed the music for all of Kieślowski's films from *No End* (1984) onwards. Krzysztof Piesiewicz was co-scriptwriter on these same films. Piotr Sobociński was the cinematographer on *Decalogue 3* and *9* and *Three Colours: Red*. Sławomir Idziak was the cinematographer on *Decalogue 5/ A Short Film about Killing*, *The Double Life of Veronique* and *Three Colours: Blue*. Edward Kłosiński was the cinematographer on *Decalogue 2* and *Three Colours: White*.

The best idea I had in *Decalogue* was that each of the ten films was made by a different lighting cameraman. I thought that these ten stories should be narrated in a slightly different way. It was fantastic. I gave a choice to the cameramen I'd worked with before, but for those whom I was working with for the first time, I sought out ideas, or films, which I believed would, in some way, suit and interest them and allow them to make best use of what they had: their skills, inventiveness, intelligence, and so on.²²⁰

Kieślowski's expressed frustration with the documentary format's inability to describe everything developed during the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period and it is at this time that he begins to make fiction films which, while their style adheres to the observational methods of his documentaries, their content focuses on the moral dilemmas of a single protagonist. *Camera Buff* is the first film in this experimental period, closely followed by *Blind Chance* (1981) and these themes are further explored in his subsequent film (following the Martial Law period when he stopped working as a filmmaker: 1981-1983) *No End* (1984). These three films are a new departure for Kieślowski for the following reasons. They all open with a sequence which is presented without context but which later turns out to have an important significance for an understanding of the film. These opening scenes contain vivid, memorable images which remain with the audience even though their significance is not immediately apparent. The narrative of each of these films develops due to the character's engagement with a variety of moral dilemmas. In this brief period from 1979 to 1984 Kieślowski's frustration with the documentary format's inability to allow him to describe the inner life leads him to experiment with ways of doing this in the fiction films. It is in *Camera Buff* that we first see these experiments take place.

The narrative of the *Camera Buff* concerns a young purchasing agent, Filip (Jerzy Stuhr) at a large factory who buys a movie camera whilst his wife is pregnant to record the birth and life of their child. Soon he is asked by the manager of the factory to use his camera to record the factory's anniversary celebrations. His success in making this film leads to the establishment of a film club in the workplace and more commissions from the factory. This in turn leads to his further involvement

²²⁰ Stok, Danusia, ed. p.156.

in the world of Polish amateur filmmaking: attendance at film festivals, organising a talk by Krzysztof Zanussi at the film club, approaches to make films for television. As his success in the world of film increases his marriage begins to fail. The factory manager demands that certain scenes be cut from his film and when a short film is shown on television without these cuts the factory manager fires another worker, Osuch (Jerzy Nowak) who was responsible for cultural activities at the factory. At the end of the film Filip turns the camera on himself and begins to record his own story.

There are two main features of this film which point towards the representation of the unconscious that would become a feature of Kieślowski's later work. The first of these is the dream sequence that opens the film. The second is the series of moral dilemmas that Filip has to face in the course of the film. In the opening sequence Kieślowski introduces a technique that he will develop throughout the rest of his career: that of disconcerting the audience from the start of the film. His later films often begin with a shot whose meaning cannot be determined immediately: the audience is plunged into the centre of an event without having any reference points with regards to character or locale. In *Camera Buff* the opening sequence shows a hawk swooping down into a field to attack and kill a chicken. This sequence lasts for less than a minute before we cut to the outside of an apartment block at night. A light goes on in one of the windows and the film cuts to Irka (Malgorzata Zabkowska) waking up in bed that it becomes clear that these are dream images. In this sequence the image of the hawk and the chicken only makes sense after it has appeared on screen. This is the first time that Kieślowski demands that his audience have a retrospective understanding of a scene or image. The cut to Irka waking up which explains this image as her dream imitates the way in which unconscious thoughts and actions can only be understood after they have occurred.

Kieślowski used variations of this technique throughout the rest of his career. In his next film *Blind Chance* (1981) he again begins the film by plunging the audience in to a series of images for which there is no set up and no context. This film opens with a close-up of a screaming mouth and cuts to a montage of events in which it is difficult to formulate any connection between each individual segment of the

montage. It is only later in the film that it becomes clear that segments represent events from the life of the protagonist Witek (Boguslaw Linda) and it is only in the final scene of the film that it becomes clear that it is Witek who screams at the start of the film as he realised that the plane he is on is about to crash. The montage sequence can then be read as an image of his life flashing before his eyes in the moments prior to his death. However, as with the opening sequence in *Camera Buff* it is only possible to understand this montage sequence as a memory sequence after the fact.

A further development of the technique of retrospective understanding occurs in Kieślowski's 1984 film *No End*. The narrative of this film details the involvement of the wife of a recently deceased lawyer in the world of the banned Solidarity movement and in particular a case her husband was working on before he died regarding the defence of a worker who was imprisoned for striking and is now on hunger strike. This film contains elements that are similar to *Camera Buff* and *Blind Chance*: a realistic portrayal of everyday life in Poland, an exposure of the difficulties of living under the pressures of a totalitarian regime by focusing on the impact that regime has on a single individual. As in the earlier films it also has an opening sequence that is not immediately coherent and which functions as a prelude to what will follow. Like these earlier films *No End*'s opening sequence contains an element that is initially disorientating for the audience. The first sequence presents the ghost of the dead lawyer. It is not immediately made clear that the figure is a ghost and it is only subsequently apparent that he was the husband of the protagonist.

The fact that these images are particularly vivid (a hawk killing a chicken, a screaming mouth) means that they stay with the audience even though they do not understand the significance of the scene to the overall meaning of the film at this stage. It is a technique that he used again and again in all his films from this point onward and it is a technique that is particularly suitable to portraying the unconscious of a protagonist on screen, for it is a technique that imitates the relationship between the unconscious and the conscious mind. Unconscious thoughts and sensations only enter the conscious mind if they are disguised enough from their original source event. At the moment when this happens it is not clear what these thoughts are or why they occurred at that particular moment. Freud's example of slips of the tongue

is a good illustration of this principle. When we make such a verbal blunder the word or phrase seems to appear from out of the blue without context. It is only later, if we trace back the possible meanings of this misplaced expression that we gain an understanding of its significance. The technique that Kieślowski introduced in *Camera Buff* of presenting a scene or an image without an establishing shot and with little or no contextual information mimics the way in which the unconscious appears to the conscious mind.

This technique was further developed when Kieślowski came to filming the unconscious of the protagonist, Julie (Juliette Binoche) in *Three Colours: Blue* (1993). Here, instead of using a startling image of animals or people Kieślowski covers the entire screen in a blue wash to represent the unconscious processes of Julie's mind. The appearance of these blue washes works in a similar way to the opening sequences of the earlier films. The audience's attention is held by the vividness of the colour wash, and while it doesn't immediately understand the meaning of these shots, the power of the image stays with them. In this later film Kieślowski repeats this technique many times throughout the film, familiarising the audience with the appearance of these blue washes while withholding their significance until the end of the film. The technique is thus developed in this film, moving from vivid images of people or animals to a colour effect. The repetition of this technique throughout the film also indicates that it is a technique that has been modified over time. Here the repeated blue washes allow the audience to become accustomed to the image, it is a reminder from the filmmaker that this moment is significant to the film, the repetition invites the audience to attempt to understand this significance during the film.

The second aspect of *Camera Buff* that features as a precursor to the representation of the unconscious in Kieślowski's later films is the constant array of moral choices that Filip is confronted with throughout the narrative. These include a series of loyalty tests concerning his wife and child, his friends and colleagues, his employer and his own sense of self – most significantly as an artist and as a father. Each moral choice that he faces is inextricably linked to his loyalty to himself or to another person or group. It is clear through the film that choosing the “right” way

will always lead to a clash with personal and professional success. This is brought home very vividly in the scene where Osuch is sacked. As a result of encouraging Filip and supporting his filmmaking activities and his film club he went against the dictates of the party and paid the price. Loyalty to the party and loyalty to ones own principles are in constant struggle throughout this film. Pressure is brought to bear on Filip to choose the way of the party over his own desire for artistic freedom. The moral choices also extend to his personal life – his interest in filmmaking and his growing belief that his films have something significant to say lead him further and further away from his wife and child.

These moral dilemmas operate as a method of having the interior life of the protagonist drive the narrative forward. In this film Filip constantly has to choose what is right – for himself, his family, and his friends. This focus on personal ethical values creates a film where most of the action revolves around the protagonist; there are few scenes which do not feature Filip. While the choices that Filip makes throughout the film come from conscious and not unconscious decisions it is nevertheless the first of Kieślowski's films where an aspect of the inner life of a human being (in this case moral reasoning) is brought to the forefront of the story and thus functions as a major narrative device. Both of these techniques made their first appearance in *Camera Buff*. The combination of an initially unexplained vivid image followed by a retrospective explanation of that image was a technique that Kieślowski was to develop to its fullest extent in portraying the unconscious of Julie in *Three Colours: Blue*. Equally significant for the portrayal of the unconscious in his later films is the portrayal of Filip's moral reasoning in *Camera Buff* as it is Filip's moral reasoning which moves the narrative forward in this film in a way that is similar to how the unconscious of the characters in Kieślowski's later films also advance the narrative of those films.

Whereas the earlier films presented a realistic portrayal of life in Poland combined with the difficult moral choices involved in living under a communist regime, *No End* differs in that it is Kieślowski's most experimental film to date both with regards to form and content. In the introduction of a protagonist whose personal and emotional response to the death of her husband receives as much screen time as

the decline of the Solidarity movement. Kieślowski's reading of the reception of *No End* points towards the significance he still placed on the importance of the reaction of an audience to a film indicating that his relationship with an audience was important beyond the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period. Initially the three most significant critical responses to a film at this time came from the state, the opposition and the church. Kieślowski states that all three groups criticised the film: the state due to its references to the Solidarity period, the opposition because it showed the decline of the Solidarity movement, and the church because the film contained a suicide.²²¹ Kieślowski acknowledges the reception the film got from these important sections of society saying: "We really got a thrashing over it". He then continues:

Only one element didn't give us a thrashing, and that was the audience....The public. Firstly, they went to see it. And secondly, never in my life have I received as many letters or phone calls about a film from people I didn't know as I did after *No End*. And all of them, in fact – I didn't get a single bad letter or call – said that I'd spoken the truth about martial law.²²²

In a chapter on his general attitude to filmmaking in Stok's book, Kieślowski talks at length about his relationship with the audience throughout his career. He is interested in what the audience understands about his films, not box office receipts. At various stages he mentions with pleasure that he has received letters from people stating that his films copied the story of their lives, or that they had an emotional connection to the film. He specifically mentions *Camera Buff* (1979), *A Short Film about Killing* (1988), *A Short Film about Love* (1988) and *The Double Life of Veronique* (1991), films from various periods in his career. He states a preference for audiences "who state that the film is about them, or those who say that it meant something to them, those for whom the film has changed something."²²³ Kieślowski talks in a similar way about audience reaction to *The Double Life of Veronique* (1991), again detailing the numbers of letters he received and telling of the approaches audiences made to him after its screening at film festivals. With regards to this film he tells a story or an

²²¹ Stok, Danusia, ed. pp.136-7.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid. p.210

individual's reaction to the film that indicates his continuing interest in the audience reaction to his films, linking that reaction to his reason for making films.

At a meeting just outside Paris, a fifteen-year-old girl came up to me and said that she'd been to see *Veronique*. She'd gone once, twice, three times and only wanted to say one thing really – that she realized that there is such a thing as a soul. She hadn't known before, but now she knew that the soul does exist. There's something very beautiful in that. It was worth making *Veronique* for that girl. It was worth working for a year, sacrificing all that money, energy, time, patience, torturing yourself, killing yourself, taking thousands of decisions, so that one young girl in Paris should realise that there is such a thing as a soul. It's worth it. These are the best viewers. There aren't many of them but perhaps there are a few.²²⁴

Like *No End*, this film also follows on from a more realistic portrayal of life in Poland (*The Decalogue*, 1988) and it also contains elements that are as mysterious as the appearance of the ghost in the earlier film. Finally, in an interview regarding the making of *Three Colours: Red* it becomes clear that the relationship that developed between filmmaker and audience during the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period was an element that Kieślowski wanted to maintain and develop throughout the rest of his career. In this interview he states:

I know how normal viewers react. They show me, tell me, that they have seen and understood something that I wanted them to see and understand even if it's buried deep in the film. They see the signs and read them.²²⁵

Despite the fact that this intimacy between director and audience could not be repeated away from the cultural and political climate of the opposition movement in Poland in the 1970s he constantly referred to having a relationship with the audience and in particular he placed an emphasis on the fact that he had faith that his audience would understand the more ambiguous elements of his films. Sławomir Idziak who worked as cinematographer on many of Kieślowski's films comments on the importance of the audience to him as follows:

²²⁴ Ibid. pp. 210-11

²²⁵ Kieślowski, Krzysztof. Interview. *Three Colours: Red* Dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski. Artificial Eye, 2004. DVD

His artistic ability was a result of the awareness that what we create is one thing, and how the viewers will perceive it, is something else. It was very important for him to probe into the sphere of impact of what he filmed. So he continuously looked for the feedback, how his work may be received.²²⁶

This intense relationship with the audience begins at the same time as Kieślowski makes a decision to abandon the documentary format. During the Cinema of Moral Anxiety period Kieślowski experimented with the form and content of his films. In these films he presented events and scenes that could only be understood retrospectively, a technique he was to use later in the Three Colours Trilogy. His fiction films of this period also featured single protagonists who were confronted with a variety of moral decisions and choices. These moral dilemmas operate as a method of having the interior life of the protagonist drive the narrative forward. In his later films it is the unconscious of the protagonist which takes over this function. The change in format from documentary to fiction films also occurs in this period. Therefore over a short period of time Kieślowski alters the types of films he makes as well as their narrative structure and their style. During this period as a member of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement he and other filmmakers work collaboratively and have a sense of unity with the audience. It is at this very experimental, creative period in his career that Kieślowski receives positive audience feedback on his films, due in part to the unique political situation in Poland at that time. As has been indicated above, positive audience reaction to his films held a great deal of meaning for Kieślowski, it seems not unlikely that the positive audience reaction to these experiments he was making in style and form encouraged his pursuit of these new methods of making films.

Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski had varying degrees of interest in and knowledge of psychoanalysis. Of the three Buñuel's involvement with the Surrealist movement in Paris suggests that he more than the other two had an understanding of psychoanalysis that went beyond the average. In particular Surrealism's interest in the unconscious and its potential for opening up access to creativity and Buñuel's involvement with that movement indicates that his understanding of psychoanalysis and the unconscious was influential in his work as a film director. Hitchcock on the

²²⁶ Polish Film Institute. *Krzysztof Kieślowski (1941-1996) Film Director*. Skorpion: Warsaw, 2006. p. 15

other hand did not have the same stated enthusiasm for the unconscious or psychoanalysis; rather he seemed to view psychoanalysis as a useful topic on which to base a popular narrative film. Nevertheless, each of the films he made which engaged with psychoanalysis indicates an interest and knowledge of that topic. The final director examined in this thesis, Krzysztof Kieślowski, seems at first appearance to have had neither knowledge nor interest in psychoanalysis. However, his repeated use of the phrase “the inner life” to explain what motivated him to make films and his descriptions of what made up the inner life (dreams, intuitions, presentiments) is analogous to a description of the unconscious.

Chapter Four: Techniques for representing a character's unconscious on screen

“On the other hand, of course, cinema is also a language.”²²⁷

This chapter examines the cinematic techniques used by Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski to represent the unconscious of a protagonist on screen. Four films have been analysed for this chapter – *Marnie* (1964), and the *Three Colours Trilogy: Blue* (1993), *White* (1994) and *Red* (1994). This chapter first examines *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* and argues that the type of unconscious behaviour represented on screen is repression and the return of the repressed. It will contend that although Hitchcock and Kieślowski belonged to very different filmmaking traditions, that, nevertheless both use an almost identical method to indicate the presence of the protagonist's unconscious on screen. This method is a visual and aural indication that the repressed has returned which has only a momentary presence on screen each time. Both directors' visual technique involves flooding the screen with a colour wash (red in *Marnie*, blue in *Three Colours: Blue*) at the moment of the return of the repressed. This chapter will argue that this colour wash is a technique which emulates the way the unconscious attempts to break through to consciousness by disguise. These colours refer indirectly to that which has been repressed. Both films also use sound to indicate the return of the repressed. In *Marnie* the sound of a thunderstorm is used to aid the audience with connecting these moments of the return of the repressed to the overall narrative and will be discussed in the following chapter on narrative. In *Three Colours: Blue*, sound is used in a similar manner to the colour wash: it indicates the return of the repressed of the character. A different technique of representing the unconscious of a character is used in *Three Colours: White* and *Three Colours: Red* where the latent desires and memories of the protagonists are explored. Here the unconscious is represented by a visual symbol, where rather than

²²⁷ Bazin, André. “The Ontology of the Photographic Image” *What is Cinema?* Vol. 1. Trans. Hugh Gray. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. p.16

the unconscious being represented momentarily on screen through colour or sound it is represented through an object that has a physical presence in the film and becomes part of the mise-en-scene. It functions to indicate latency, matters which are not to the forefront of consciousness but which at the same time do not originate in a trauma. After discussing the techniques used to represent these specific types of unconscious behaviour this chapter then goes on to consider how a more general representation of the unconscious of a protagonist can be depicted through time and language. The progress of time in film can be manipulated in various ways. Duration can be slowed down or speeded up. It can move easily between past, present and future. Films which use the unconscious of a protagonist as a main motivation force for actions distort time in many different ways. Movements are extended beyond the duration of the action, linear time is often halted and movements between past, present and future are frequent. *Three Colours: White* will be examined in this section. Using language in the form of dialogue to represent a character's unconscious thoughts and actions is not a technique that is often used. It requires great spectator knowledge of the character (thus on second and subsequent viewings of *Psycho* Norman's language appears more layered and more revealing of his unconscious motivation than initially appears to be the case) or a scene involving the character and an analyst whereby the analyst shows that the language of the patient represents their unconscious desires and wishes (e.g.) *Spellbound*). However, in *Three Colours: Red* there are a series of dialogues between the two main characters where the language itself combined with the occasional image functions to reveal the unconscious desires of both protagonists. Each of these techniques emulates the operation of the unconscious in a mimetic fashion; they are attempts to use the language of cinema to express the unconscious of the characters of film.

Techniques for representing the return of the repressed on film

In *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* the unconscious of the protagonists is represented with reference to the return of the repressed memory. In *Three Colours: Blue* it is the repression of grief and creativity that returns, in *Marnie* it is the repression of a murder that returns. The films are similar in that each director uses colour and sound

to represent the return of the repressed of the protagonists. They also attempt to place the spectator in the position of the protagonist with regards to knowledge and effect. That is to say, as the return of the repressed of a character appears on screen without any forewarning or subsequent explanation the audience is as bewildered as the character as to the significance of these moments. Robin Wood describes these moments of direct presentation of the unconscious in *Marnie* as follows:

Because of her traumatic experience, the colour red, seen either under conditions of great tension or in a way that directly evokes the experience itself (the *spreading* red ink on the blouse sleeve, the red blotches on the jockey's shirt), acts as a release mechanism for Marnie's suppressed tensions – the tensions that are with her, to some extent, continually. Its immediate effect is to provoke a sort of hysterical swoon, a panic reactions, as the terrifying, buried memory forces itself dangerously near the surface of consciousness, which in turn produces a sense of unreality. Now, Hitchcock is not Preminger: he doesn't want merely to *show* us a woman caught in this condition, he wants to convey to us the feeling of the condition itself – wants us to experience it directly as Marnie experiences it, as far as that is possible. What better, simpler, more beautifully economical and direct way than by these red flashes that suffuse the whole screen, filling us, too, with a feeling of panic (we know no more than Marnie what they mean), conveying this sense of being plunged abruptly, arbitrarily, into unreality?²²⁸

Wood's comment that by using these red suffusions to allow the audience to experience what Marnie is experiencing is a good example of the effect of the representation of the return of the repressed of a character. The most significant aspect of Wood's analysis is that he points to the fact that the audience as well as the character are ignorant as to the meaning of these moments in the film. By keeping the audience in the dark as to the significance of these moments Hitchcock gives priority to the operations of the unconscious as they appear to the conscious mind. Krzysztof Kieślowski uses the same technique when representing the unconscious of his protagonist in *Three Colours: Blue*. In this film as in *Marnie* the technique of representing the return of the repressed attempts to recreate the impact that unconscious thoughts have on the conscious mind. As these films do not prepare the way for the appearance of the representation of the unconscious of the protagonist the

²²⁸ Wood, Robin. *Hitchcock's Films Revisited*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. pp. 175-6

audience experiences (to use Robin Wood's phrase) these moments along with the protagonist. This technique makes for a strong audience identification with the character as instead of seeing the world from their perspective, we experience it along with them from a perspective that is inherently their perspective, but, one that they do not know belongs to them at least at the moment of its occurring.

Representing the unconscious of a character on screen presents certain challenges for a director as it involves presenting a character who is set up as behaving without being aware of the motivation for that behaviour. The difficulty is to indicate to the audience what is happening in those moments of apparently unmotivated character actions. The sudden appearance of the return of the repressed in *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* is startling as it occurs without any narrative build up, neither does a subsequent explanation follow its depiction on screen. The danger is that these moments could seem to be narratively meaningless – a stylistic flourish on behalf of the director. Both Hitchcock and Kieślowski use the same techniques to encourage audience knowledge of the protagonist prior to the first representation of the return of the repressed. Firstly they allow the audience to observe the character in the opening section of the film. Both films present the protagonists alone for long periods of the opening sequences allowing the audience to observe them. Secondly, both Hitchcock and Kieślowski employ the infrequently used technique of having the character give a direct look to camera and therefore to the audience prior to the first representation of the return of the repressed. This aids in creating a bond between character and spectator. Finally, as music is used to represent the return of the repressed in *Three Colours: Blue* all other uses of music are limited in the film up until this moment.

The first direct presentation of the character's unconscious is the most important in both films. Firstly, because it is the most disturbing of the narrative progression that has occurred so far and hence most memorable for the audience and secondly because the clarity of this first presentation sets it up as a template whose repetitions throughout the film will become familiar to the audience. Both films open with sequences whereby the main character is observed by the audience for an extended period. With *Marnie* we watch her on the train platform, in the hotel as she changes

her appearance and in the train station. We also hear descriptions of her from other characters, Strutt and Mark, who also have observed her. In *Three Colours: Blue* we observe Julie's reaction to the accident and follow her recovery in hospital. Thus up until the appearance of the unconscious of the protagonist in both these films the audience has gained a knowledge of that protagonist through watching them as they engage in very intimate acts. In these sequences we rarely see either of them engage with other characters. In *Marnie* the first occasion when she talks to another character is when she returns to her mother's house, just before the first appearance of the representation of her unconscious. In *Three Colours: Blue*, while Julie speaks with three characters in this section the dialogue itself is perfunctory and serves to aid our observations of the character. This prolonged watching of both characters develops a sense of intimacy between character and audience that is intensified by the relative lack of dialogue or engagement with other characters. As the audience observes these characters alone in their most intimate moments they feel that they know these characters in a way that escapes the knowledge of other characters in the films. While Kickasola does not comment on the observation of the character in this film he does refer to it when writing on *Three Colours: Red*, saying that it is an indication of Kieślowski's documentary experience. He states that observing rather than meeting the characters allows the audience to "...make our own conjectures about them."²²⁹ The impression created is that the audience member is the sole observer of these characters and this creates the sense that they have more detailed and intimate knowledge of these characters. In this manner the audience is given the privileged position of having unique and sole access to Julie's grief and Marnie's post-theft routine.

Both films also feature a direct look to camera from each character in these opening sequences. The direct look to camera (and therefore at the audience) is rare in cinema as it breaks the "fourth wall" which separates spectator from character. When it does occur it is often in conjunction with dialogue from the character that directly addresses the audience e.g.) *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (John Hughes, 1986) or *JCVD* (Mabrouk El Mechri, 2008). With dialogue the direct look to camera becomes

²²⁹ Kickasola, Joseph. p. 299

partly confessional – the character tells the audience details that are not divulged to other characters. I maintain that in these scenes from *Three Colours: Blue* and *Marnie* the confessional aspect remains despite there being no dialogue. Joseph Kickasola describes the image that appears on screen at the moment of Julie’s look at the audience as iconic. He states that this iconic look at the audience is one of Kieślowski’s frequently used motifs and notes the way in which these moments engage the audience with the character as follows:

This motif...features a character that...stares directly at the camera. The power of these moments is hard to describe...They signal a spiritual pause, a caesura for reflection. More importantly, the audience can no longer escape involvement. This is a key point when we consider that Kieślowski was constantly mindful of guilt or indiscretion on the audience’s part...When he engages the audience directly, he does not do so lightly. Invariably, the metaphysical weight of the scene warrants reflection.²³⁰

Kickasola views these looks to camera by the protagonist as indicating Kieślowski’s preoccupation with metaphysics in his films. While the focus of this thesis is on the psychoanalytical rather than the philosophical elements of this film, nevertheless, it is the impact on the audience of Julie’s look to camera that is significant for both readings of this film. Kickasola is correct when he states that “the audience can no longer escape involvement” after this moment. It is a direct engagement between character and spectator which forms a unique connection between the two.

In *Three Colours: Blue* Julie’s look to camera occurs as she is recovering in hospital. It happens in the scene where she is watching the funeral of her husband and daughter on a portable television which Olivier has brought her for that purpose. We watch as Julie touches her daughter’s coffin on the screen and then see in extreme close-up her eyes and her mouth as she first fights and then gives into the urge to cry. At this moment the reception is lost on the television and the picture turns to static. It is then that Julie’s face turns towards the camera and she stares directly into the lens. Her eye and that of the audience meet at this moment. This is a direct look to camera that is held for a few seconds thus clarifying its purpose. Its effect is to further

²³⁰ Ibid. p.38

develop the audience knowledge of Julie at this time. Her look to camera states her grief and acknowledges the presence of the audience.

This look at the audience cements the bond that has been developing between audience and character as a result of the observation of the character by the audience. Observation encourages a degree of intimacy between the audience and the character. The look to camera increases that sense of intimacy as it is a direct engagement between character and audience. Before this look at the audience Julie has just cried while watching the funeral of her daughter and husband on TV. After this moment she doesn't cry again until the final moments of the film. The look at the audience can be interpreted as challenging the audience to question that decision not to grieve. The significance of this moment arises from the fact that the audience is the only witness to it, giving them a sense of privileged information over the other characters – who do question Julie's refusal to mourn – and a sense of a greater knowledge and understanding of the character due to this privileged position.

Marnie's look to camera which also occurs in the opening sequence of that film is of an entirely different type, although it produces the same effects. This look takes place whilst Marnie is in her hotel room washing the dye from her hair as she completes the transformation that will change her identity and thus make it difficult to be caught for the robbery at Strutt's. The moment occurs when Marnie is lifting her head from the wash basin. As she does so she looks directly into the mirror in front of her and with this look she too acknowledges the audience's presence. Like Julie, Marnie's look implies complicity on the part of the audience, an acknowledgement that they have had access to a part of Marnie's life that is kept hidden from the other characters in the film. However, Marnie's expression as she looks at the audience is one of smug satisfaction. It declares her delight in the fact that she has successfully tricked Strutt, not only by stealing from him but by behaving like a model (and modest) employee before the theft. The look also requests the audience's admiration for Marnie, for her ability to trick the small minded, leering Strutt in this manner. In an analysis of this scene Raymond Bellour emphasises the look that Marnie gives to the mirror only and minimises the significance of the look that she gives to the audience:

Marnie looks at herself, in what is supposed to be her mirror, contemplating the triumphant image of a split identity that responds with theft and metamorphosis to the sexual aggression that her being constructed as an image seems to spark. But she is not looking at the camera. The sustained look is intentionally too high, avoiding the camera axis that would link Marnie and the spectator or collapse the mirror into the screen. (In fact, they do coincide for a brief moment but in a way that is effectively virtual with respect to the unfolding [*defilement*] of the film: only when one slows down the film on an editing table to look at the scene where Marnie, in one continuous movement, raises her head and stares at herself in the mirror, can one see, and feel the full force of, the single frame that lines up her gaze, her image, the camera, and the spectator.²³¹

While the look that Marnie gives to the audience does not last as long as that of Julie's in *Three Colours: Blue*, nevertheless there is a moment in this sequence where the gaze of Marnie and the audience meet. Although Bellour's analysis of the scene is interesting and provocative he is incorrect in stating that her look to camera (and therefore at the audience) is only visible when the motion of the film is paused on an editing table. While brief this look to camera is clearly visible when the film is shown at normal speed. However Bellour is accurate when he describes as powerful the moment that unites "her gaze, her image, the camera, and the spectator." Bellour writes of Marnie's image as being constructed by Hitchcock, Mark, Strutt, the (male) spectator and views her thefts as a rebellion against that construction of self by others. As part of this argument he emphasises the fact that Marnie is looking in to a mirror when her look and that of the audience coincide: "contemplating the triumphant image of a split identity that responds with theft and metamorphosis to the sexual aggression that her being constructed as an image seems to spark." Again Bellour is correct when he claims that Marnie takes pleasure in admiring her (self-created) image in the mirror. However, by including the spectator, through the direct look to camera, in this moment of self-admiration Bellour misses the significance of the moment of complicity between Marnie and the audience that occurs in this scene. Marnie takes the audience into her confidence with this direct look at them. By

²³¹ Bellour, Raymond. *The Analysis of Film*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002. p.231

including the audience she seems to ask of them: “Don’t you admire me also?” and perhaps: “Would you like to find out why I behave in this manner?”

As a result of these looks to camera from Marnie and Julie the audience feels as if they have a particular intimate knowledge of these characters. This feeling of connection between audience and character that results from these looks to camera is particularly important when it comes to audience acceptance of the first appearance of the unconscious of these characters. For without this increasing intimacy and knowledge that the audience have of the two protagonists the first appearance of the representation of their unconscious would be too startling and it is likely that it would be rejected by the audience as having no meaning within the film.

The representation of the return of the repressed in *Three Colours: Blue* is also depicted by music. Kieślowski uses music as a way to indicate that Julie’s unconscious is breaking through her blocked off, functional way of living. In order for the audience to recognise that this is one of the roles that music plays in the film, he prepares very carefully. The first time we hear music used in this way is just before Julie leaves hospital. Prior to this there has only been one brief moment of diegetic music. This occurs when Julie is watching Patrice and Anna’s funeral on TV. During the funeral a band plays “The Concert for the Unification of Europe”, the composition that Patrice was working on before he died. This is the same tune that we will hear as the music that represents the unconscious. The opening sequence is devoid of music and dialogue, the film being silent except for the diegetic sounds of the car journey. Kieślowski continues this technique throughout the scenes in the hospital, while other characters appear here their dialogue with Julie is minimal and functional, the relative silence of the film preparing us for the significance of the music when it finally occurs.

This important scene takes place on the balcony of Julie’s room at the hospital. It is clear that her recovery has advanced at this stage. She appears healthy and relaxed, her physical injuries have improved, and she is dozing in the sun with a book on her lap. When the music begins Julie reacts with shock. She is disturbed and upset; it is clear from her expression that the music is an unwanted intrusion. Kieślowski then uses camera movement and variations in volume to indicate that this

apparently non-diegetic music is in fact subjectively diegetic music in that it comes from Julie herself, it represents her unconscious. When she first hears the music she turns to the left as if looking for a source for the music. The camera follows her gaze, deliberately showing the audience that there is no source. With this camera movement the volume of the music also decreases, suggesting that as we move away from Julie we move away from the source. The camera then tracks back to Julie with a corresponding increase in the volume of the music. The movement of the camera and the change in volume unite to suggest that the music comes from Julie herself. This suggestion is reinforced as we hear a voice say “Hello” and the music stops at this moment, indicating that the music is only audible to Julie and stressing its interior source by the fact that it stops at an interruption from the outside world. After we hear “Hello” the music starts again and the screen fades to black before cutting to a woman on the adjoining balcony and Julie returning her greeting.

There are four moments which combine music and a fade to black in this film. Kieślowski described what he is trying to achieve with them as follows:

.....there are four fade outs which bring us back to exactly the same moment. The idea is to convey an extremely subjective point of view. That is, that time really does pass, but for Julie, at a certain moment it stand still...What I want to show is that for Julie time has stopped. Not only does the music come back to her but time stands still for a moment.²³²

In the scene on the hospital balcony, Kieślowski makes it clear that the music is interior music that it comes from Julie. The first time the music is used in this way is also given a neutral setting, the music does not occur in response to anything. However when the music is used in this way again, it represents Julie’s unconscious breaking through her blocked and functional existence. In order for us to understand the use of music in this way it is necessary for our first experience of it to show that it has deliberately and only come from within Julie.

Julie’s reaction to the loss of her husband and child overpowers her. Rather than express her grief she blocks it out, making a conscious decision to live without memories, without love, without friendships. She succeeds admirably in living her

²³² Stok, Danusia, ed. pp. 216-7

life in this way until she is confronted with moments of memories or grief that are too strong for her to repress. It is at these moments that her memories come back to her in the form of music. After the scene on the balcony, the music is used three times to suggest Julie's unconscious breaking through. Firstly, when she meets Antoine, the young man who witnessed the car crash, then when she discovers the mice and Lucille, a neighbour asks if she is crying, finally when she questions Olivier about Patrice's mistress. Each of these scenes represents something that Julie is trying to suppress. Antoine returns a necklace he found at the scene of the accident, a love token from Patrice, the mouse that Julie finds in her apartment has just had babies, Julie sends the neighbour's cat to kill them, the scene mirrors Julie's own inexplicable loss of her child, and her discovery of Patrice's mistress leads her to question her relationship with her husband and the nature of her loss.

In order to emphasise the role of music as representing the unconscious Kieślowski limits other uses of music in this film. There are occasional moments of non-diegetic music, rather almost every time there is music there is an on-screen source for that music. In particular Kieślowski rarely uses music where it would be expected to be heard; music seldom mimics the action in this film, nor is it used to convey a character's emotions. In limiting the use of music and in creating a film with a minimum of dialogue Kieślowski relies on the image to convey information to the audience. The relative lack of diegetic music and dialogue also places emphasis on the silences in the film and gives prominence to other diegetic noises apart from the music. This combination of a specific use of music, silence, and image, work together to convey the extent of Julie's grief at the loss of her family. It is important for the audience to understand the enormity of that loss so as to appreciate Julie's efforts to block it off.

In the case of Marnie the trauma of the murder has been repressed from her conscious mind but it has successfully disguised itself as a substitute formation manifesting itself as a phobia with regards to the colour red when presented in certain liquid formations. The first scene of this kind takes place in the home of Marnie's mother Bernice shortly after Marnie arrives and presents her mother with some white chrysanthemums. Marnie goes to remove the red gladioli which are in a vase in order

to replace them with her gift of flowers when she has her first reaction to the colour red. On seeing the red flowers she visibly starts backwards as if she had been struck and at the same time the screen fills with a red wash which covers the entire frame. Marnie's reaction to the red flowers is one of fear and unpleasure at their presence although we don't know at this stage her reasons for being afraid. The filling of the screen with a red wash indicates that Marnie is overpowered at this moment, that so strong is her reaction that her world seems to be enveloped in red. Marnie's reaction to the red gladioli is the first appearance of her unconscious on screen. She recoils from the flowers and immediately the screen fills with a red wash. This is an intensely subjective moment. Marnie's unconscious repression of the death of the sailor breaks through to her consciousness at this moment. She is overwhelmed by the colour of the flowers to such a degree that everything in her world is bathed in red for the duration of this reaction. While not consciously aware of the reasons for her reaction to the colour red, nevertheless Marnie is aware that she is violently upset by the presence of the red gladioli. This awareness of her reaction to the colour red indicates that that which she has attempted to repress has returned to consciousness. It is a moment when the unconscious repressed overwhelms her conscious self. This first appearance of the character's unconscious on screen is as disturbing for the audience as it is for Marnie.

Techniques for representing latency

This section argues that in *Three Colours: White* Kieślowski employs objects which are part of the mise-en-scene to represent the unconscious of the protagonist Karol. It contends that the type of unconscious matter that is represented in this film is Karol's latent sexual desire for his ex-wife Dominique. The film opens with their divorce proceedings at which it is revealed that Dominique has instigated the proceedings as marriage was not consummated. Shortly after this scene their mutual sexual desire is made explicit in a scene where they begin to have sex. Karol's inability to continue enrages Dominique. She sets fire to their hairdressing salon, staging that the police will view it as an act of revenge on the part of Karol – a reaction to the divorce he did not want. The inclusion of the sex scene is significant in relation to an examination

of the representation of Karol's unconscious. It explicitly reveals Karol's sexual desire for Dominique. However, his inability to act on that desire has disastrous consequences for him. Beginning with the divorce he is left homeless, without money, employment and a fugitive. The rest of the film depicts Karol rising from this inauspicious start to become a powerful and successful businessman in the lucrative black market of post-1989 Poland. A scene towards the end of the film when he leaves Dominique in the hands of the Polish police having been suspected of murder indicates that part of the impetus for his business success was revenge. He wanted to leave Dominique as helpless in Warsaw as she had left him in Paris.

And yet, throughout the film two objects – pigeons and a statuette – work to indicate Karol's latent desire for Dominique. The frequent appearance of these objects on screen work to deny the post-divorce success story that constitutes the main narrative flow of this film. Both objects have direct connections to Dominique, the pigeons featured at their wedding and form a part of Karol's memory of that day. The statuette he steals after the divorce as he sees a similarity between it and Dominique. The revenge theme and the exclusion of an on-screen presence of Dominique for the majority of the film indicate that she has been forgotten, the inclusion of the pigeons and the statuette, given their connections with Dominique function to indicate that Karol's desire for her is latent not extinguished. The pigeon and statuette have a constant tangible presence in this film. The technique of using a physical object to represent a character's unconscious begins with something exterior and uses these material substances as a repository for the unconscious of the character of Karol.

We first see the pigeons when Karol is walking up the steps of the courthouse. His footsteps scatter a group of pigeons on the ground and he stops, transfixed, watching one of the birds soar upwards and land on a statute on the roof of the building. For his unrestricted joy in the bird's flight he is rewarded with a large pigeon deposit on his shoulder. Shortly after this scene we witness the first flashback to the wedding and the first connection between Dominique and the pigeons which will be the main connection throughout the rest of the film. In the flashback as Dominique gets closer to the open back door of the church we see a

group of pigeons outside the door. As with her footsteps the sound of the birds in flight is exaggerated. Their noise is intensified in order to stress the connection between them and the wedding day. To emphasise their importance, the sound of the people outside the church applauding and congratulating the couple is silenced. As she leaves she disturbs them and we see and hear them scatter and fly away. As the wedding happened before the divorce (although the divorce is presented before the wedding in the film) the pigeons are connected to both Dominique and the wedding day first. Karol's reaction to the pigeons outside the courthouse can then be seen in the light of this. As he asks the judge and Dominique for another chance, believing that the marriage can still be saved, perhaps he initially responds to the pigeons outside the courthouse as a good omen - a visual and aural memory of the happiness he experienced on their wedding day. The bird defecating on him then can be seen as representing the slap in the face that is Dominique's divorce proceedings, for it is clear that Karol still remains hopeful that their marriage can be saved and he seems as astonished at appearing before divorce proceedings as he does at being defecated upon by the pigeon outside the courthouse

The flashback scene connects the pigeons with Karol and Dominique's wedding day. The statuette on the other hand represents an idealised version of Dominique. It is beautiful, silent and immobile – this version of Dominique will not divorce him. These two objects which are subsequently used to represent Karol's latent desires for Dominique are brought together in a scene shortly after Karol has left the hairdressing salon. Karol wanders through a shopping arcade carrying his trunk. As he walks we hear the sound of pigeons flapping their wings; this time without an accompanying visual image. While there appear to be similarities between this use of sound and the use of music to represent the unconscious of Julie in *Three Colours: Blue* the sound of the pigeons does not function in the same way as it did in the earlier film. In *Three Colours: Blue* the music functioned to indicate that Julie's repression of her grief and her creativity was breaking through to her conscious self. Karol has not repressed his desire for Dominique; it is latent only. Julie on the other hand never acknowledged her creative talent as a composer and has never grieved. Karol has acknowledged his sexual desire for Dominique. They are differences of degree, but important ones.

Freud indicates that latent thoughts can have access to the conscious mind with relative ease whereas repressed thoughts must disguise themselves in order to achieve the same goal²³³. The sound stops as Karol looks at a statuette in a shop window which bears a resemblance to Dominique. It starts again as he moves closer to the statue and continues as we cut to a close-up of his face as he gazes at the statuette. In subsequent scenes it becomes apparent that he has stolen it.

The next sequence where we see and hear the pigeons takes place on a platform in the Paris metro as Karol and Mikolaj are getting to know each other. We see the pigeons first behind Mikolaj as he prepares his card trick. Shortly afterwards, Mikolaj tells Karol that he is returning to Poland and asks what his plans are. As he does, the camera cuts to a medium shot of Karol and we hear the sound of a bird flapping its wings. The camera then cuts to Mikolaj as a speckled white pigeon lands on his lap. Mikolaj retains his characteristic stoic, world-weary expression at this unusual event and we cut to a close-up of Karol and witness an expression of awe and delight spread across his face. It is at this moment that he tells Mikolaj: “I want to get out of here”. His instinctive reaction to the bird is one of joy – connected with the memory of the joy of his wedding day. However, his words oppose his joy. The pigeon no longer only represents his love for Dominique it now also represents the humiliation of his divorce from her. Although we are aware that there are pigeons on the platform from the beginning of this sequence, when we hear their sound as the camera cuts to Karol we connect this bird sound without visual to Dominique as that connection has been the strongest made in the film to date. Karol’s response then when he sees the pigeon on Mikolaj’s lap: “I want to get out of here” is his first statement of intent that accepts his separation from Dominique.

The second time we hear the sound of a bird flapping its wings without an accompanying visual occurs as Karol is beginning to settle back to life in Warsaw. The scene begins with Karol at home learning French from a language tape. He is learning verbs, repeating the words he has listened to on the tape. Suddenly he stops repeating the French words, turns his head around and gazes at the bust he bought in Paris. It is at this moment that we first hear the sound of a pigeon flapping its wings.

²³³Freud, Sigmund Vol. XIV. p. 172

The tape continues to play on, instructing Karol how to pronounce the verbs; “to leave”, “to please,” and “to sleep”. He moves towards the statue and comes face to face with it and again we hear the sound of a pigeon flapping its wings. Karol then turns to kiss the statue. With this act he unites the visual and aural symbolic representations of his unconscious desire.

The next non-diagetic occurrence of this sound happens at the end of a montage sequence where we witness Karol’s rise to success and power in the lucrative post-1989 Polish black-market. The scenes before this sequence focus on how Karol is adapting to life in Warsaw, and, apart from a brief flash-forward to Dominique entering the hotel room at the end of the film, there is no reference to her at all. Dominique appears to have been forgotten as Karol achieves material success in Warsaw. The non-diagetic sound of the pigeon flapping its wings alerts us to the fact that this is not the case. This scene opens with a close-up of the bust, screen left. Karol is in the distance at the centre of the screen tossing and turning in bed. As he moves about in his sleep we hear the sound of the pigeon flapping its wings. Immediately after this Karol shouts out Dominique’s name in his sleep and wakes up. He telephones her but she refuses to respond. He replaces the receiver, looks at the statue and we cut to a scene with his lawyer. Karol is making out a new will, naming Dominique as the sole beneficiary of his vast estate. This is an important scene for understanding Karol’s motivation regarding his actions towards Dominique. The absence of any reference to Dominique in the previous section indicates that she has been forgotten and we are now watching Karol’s life alone, post divorce. The sound of the pigeon flapping its wings alerts us to the constant presence of Dominique in Karol’s life. This time he will not be satisfied with her symbolic replacement (the bust), he needs to talk with Dominique herself. His attempt ends in failure when she hangs up on him and it is only at this moment that Karol gives up hope on a mutual reconciliation and puts into action his plan to force Dominique to see him.

The next appearance of this sound is similar to the moment Karol and Mikolaj spoke in the underground. As in that scene, here we have a visual of a pigeon to accompany the sound. This time we are in Karol’s vast warehouse as he takes receipt of the body which will take his place in the coffin. There are three occasions in this

scene when we see and hear a pigeon fly past. Each time, the coffin is in view. The pigeons and especially their flight echo back to the promise they represented on the wedding day.

The final time this non-diagetic sound is heard is just before Dominique begins her flashback to the wedding day. This is the only time in the film where this sound originates with this character rather than evoke a memory of her, or symbolise Karol's desire for her. It is an indication that the flashback which follows will not run along the same pattern as before. Immediately preceding this scene Karol and Dominique have made love. Karol now both has desire for Dominique and the ability to act on that desire. This act brings their relationship back on to an equal footing. Karol no longer needs to surround himself with objects, or hear sounds which evoke the presence of Dominique for she has become flesh and blood to him once more.

Time

We have learnt that unconscious mental processes are in themselves 'timeless'. This means in the first place that they are not ordered temporally, that time does not change them in any way and that the idea of time cannot be applied to them.²³⁴

These properties of the unconscious are obviously not compatible with the processes of conscious thought. Linear consecutive time is the domain of conscious thought. The unconscious pays no respect to this notion of time; it deals equally with the present and the past. In this part of the psyche time is fluid, past and present meld together, exist at the same moment. Editing in film allows the medium to imitate this aspect of the unconscious, to move smoothly and quickly from one period of time to another. A rapid editing of shots can indicate the passing of an extended period of years in a few minutes of screen time. Film can slip instantly from past to present with a cut. Not only this, it can also display both past and present together in the same frame through the use of a flashback. Here, the present is that of the current time of the story of the film, the cut to the past is indicated by alerting the audience to the fact that the character is starting to think about the past in the moments before that

²³⁴Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XVIII. p. 28

depiction of the past is visualised on screen. For example, Jeff Bailey's (Robert Mitchum) flashback in *Out of the Past* (Jacques Tourneur, 1947) follows this pattern. It begins with Bailey and his girlfriend Ann Miller (Virginia Huston) driving to meet Whit Sterling (Kirk Douglas) the criminal Bailey had been working for before he ran off with Whit's girlfriend. The journey begins with Bailey starting to tell Ann of his past as a Private Detective. As Bailey starts the narrative of his past life the screen image of him and Ann in the car dissolves to be replaced by images of that first meeting between Whit and Bailey. The image on screen is that of an event which happened in the past, but it is an event which is being recalled in the present of this film through using the device of having Bailey tell Ann his story. "You told me once I'd have to tell you sometime – now – this is it". The past here is indicated through the images that occur after the dissolve whilst the present is indicated by the knowledge that the audience has that Bailey is recalling his past. The simultaneous presentation of past and present is strengthened in this film through the use of Bailey's voice-over throughout the flashback which serves to remind the audience that past and present are represented at the same moment on screen. Thus, the use of the flashback can indicate the presence of both the past (the visual images of the past contained in the flashback) and the present (the knowledge of the character in the "present" of the film who is thinking about the past) in the one moment. Therefore, film's ability to simultaneously indicate different periods of time makes it a medium which has the ability to represent this aspect of the unconscious. It is in particular the way in which editing can indicate both the present and the past in one scene that makes it particularly suitable as a medium to depict the unconscious.

Editing Time

Flashback in film is often used to explain the motivation for a character's actions, to explain their current emotional state, or to present piece of information that was withheld for reasons of intrigue or suspense. Occasionally, the majority of a film's narrative is presented as an extended flashback as in *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Edwards Sissorhands* (1990), and more recently, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (2008). The main purpose of a flashback, when it occurs as a scene or a sequence, is to give additional information to the spectator; to fill in a gap that has

been missing in the film up until that point. Maureen Turim describes their function as follows:

By suddenly presenting the past, flashbacks can abruptly offer new meanings connected to any person, place or object. Flashbacks then gain a particularly rich dimension in the coding of the psychology of character, and because their evidence is the past, they immediately imply a psychoanalytic dimension of personality.²³⁵

A flashback usually provides an answer to a question, asked or unasked. The additional information it provides is generally of a subjective nature; as a result of a flashback we feel that we have a greater insight into the character whose memory forms the basis of the flashback. A flashforward is only recognised by the viewer as such once the scene it anticipates has been played out in chronological order. A flashforward then, has the opposite effect on the audience than that of a flashback. A flashback provides answers, a flashforward provokes questions. When watching a flashforward we wonder: what was that? What did that scene mean? How does it fit in with the rest of the story? Both flashbacks and flashforwards disturb the chronological flow of the film. They present events out of sequence, question the relationship between cause and effect, and in doing so, create a tension in the film. This tension exists due to the way in which the spectator experiences a film. A film is always viewed in the present time. The continuous flow of events on screen takes place in the present reality of the spectator. They are viewed “as if” they are taking place in the moment in which they are being watched. Flashforwards and flashbacks disturb the spectator’s sense of time. The intrusion of the past and future into the sense of the present that dominates the viewing experience allows for a complex structure which mimics or imitates our everyday conscious and unconscious relationship with time, it indicates that time does not flow in a linear manner but rather is elliptical, dancing between past, present and future. It is the recognition of each of these time frames in a film, which the spectator experiences in their own

²³⁵ Turim, Maureen. *Flashbacks in Film*. London: Routledge, 1989. p. 12

present of watching the film, which creates a sense of tension between what is unfolding on the screen and the spectator's experience of the film.

A film which is structured non-chronologically puts particular emphasis on telling a story from a subjective perspective. Flashbacks which begin with one character are understood as being the memory of that particular character. Flashforwards can be divided into two groups. The first is the directorial or third-person flashforward. This is a non-subjective flashforward. It is used when the filmmaker wants to heighten the impact of an event which is to take place later in the film. A glimpse of that event or a partial view of elements in that scene will be shown in advance so that when the scene is viewed in chronological order the impression it makes is all the greater for having been flagged beforehand. The second type of flashforward is the subjective or first-person flashforward. It is used to indicate a premonition on the part of a character, or to precipitate the outcome of an event which the character is preparing for.²³⁶

In *Three Colours: White* Kieślowski uses both flashforwards and flashbacks right from the title sequence. Events are given importance according to their emotional impact and import. Their significance in the film depends on the prominence they receive in the conscious and unconscious mind of the protagonists. As well as disrupting the chronology of events with flashforwards and flashbacks, Kieślowski also leaves open the ownership of these memories and premonitions. As presented on screen, the film consists of three flashforwards (one directorial, two subjective) and two flashbacks. The flashbacks present a memory of Karol and Dominique's wedding day, the flashforwards present an image of Karol's betrayal of Dominique. In addition to this, neither flashback is the unique memory of one character; each appears to belong to both main protagonists at the same time. The dominance of memory and anticipation over present events in this film echoes the way in which past events which have been submerged in the unconscious affect conscious life in the present and mirrors the way in which desire, works as an impetus to action. In both scenes of the flashback to the wedding day, the flashback begins

236 For a comprehensive account of the function of the flashback see Turim, Maureen. *Flashback in Film*. London: Routledge, 1989.

with a 'present day' image of one character and ends with a 'present day' image of another. This shared ownership of the memory leaves its meaning open to interpretations as it suggests a shared memory, one which has equal significance for both characters. The initial flashforward to the trunk containing Karol on the conveyor belt is presented from a neutral or objective perspective. This piece was cut into the opening sequence late in the editing stage and unlike the other flashforward of Dominique returning to Poland, which is a premonition of a deliberate action, the initial sequence of the trunk on the conveyor belt is most likely a neutral perspective, indicating the director's intention to move between the time zones of past, present and future in this film.

Three Colours: White and Time

Kieślowski makes liberal use of both flashbacks and flashforwards in the structure of *Three Colours: White*. So much so that one commentator interprets the opening section of the film which is set in the present time as a flashback and the final flashback of the wedding as a flashforward to the couple's re-marriage²³⁷, while another critics hold out the possibility that the flashbacks to the wedding are flashforwards.²³⁸ That flashforwards can be interpreted as taking place in the present time, and flashbacks read as flashforwards, is an indication of the complex time structure that is used in this film. It is also indicative of the subjective nature of the flow of time in this film: the impact of events and feelings on the conscious and unconscious mind of the protagonist dictate the presentation of time here. The chronological structure of this film is always at risk of disruption from the emotions, feelings and in particular the desire of the protagonist.

The Flashforward

The first flashforward in this film occurs during the opening sequence. In fact it begins before the credits start to roll. One of its functions is to alert the audience to the fact that a straightforward chronology will not be observed here. Kieślowski gives two reasons for opening the film in this way; firstly this sequence (of a trunk

²³⁷ Insdorf, Annette. p.158

²³⁸ Haltof, Marek. 2004. p.139

going through the conveyor belt at the airport) links the opening scenes of all films in the trilogy. “It meant that the three films all start in the same way, with scenes underneath civilisation or technology”.²³⁹ The second reason he attributes to this opening is more ambiguous. In the same interview he states that the scene they had shot to open the film didn’t work and that he used the shots of the suitcase inter-cut with Karol approaching the court in order to get the character inside the court as efficiently as possible. Cutting between Karol in the present day and the suitcase on the carousel allowed him to give a detailed presentation of Karol’s characteristics whilst using the flashforward of the trunk to break up a long scene. The choice of this sequence (the trunk) over other possibilities (a montage of Karol and Dominique’s courtship and marriage, or Dominique arriving at the courthouse etc) is a clear statement of Kieślowski’s intent to follow a non-chronological presentation of events in this film. This is a flashforward which is unmotivated by either Karol or Dominique. It concerns an event of which neither of them have any knowledge will happen at this stage. Kieślowski’s decision to choose this sequence, over all other possibilities to open the film alerts the audience to the fact that time will not flow in a linear fashion here.

In *Three Colours: White* by opening the film with this extended sequence of the trunk travelling on the conveyor belt inter-cut with shots of Karol arriving at the courthouse Kieślowski sets forward his intentions regarding the structure of this film from the beginning. This directorial flashforward announces the non-chronological format of this film. Another reading of this choice of opening is provided by Joseph Kickasola who views the film as a “cartoonish satire on contemporary materialism and the loss of traditional values”²⁴⁰ in this context he states that the image of the moving trunk in this opening flashforward “establishes that materialism will be a topic of discussion throughout the film”.²⁴¹ Marek Haltof sees the film as a presentation of life in post-1989 Poland and refers particularly to what he calls its depiction of “wild Polish capitalism”²⁴² and apart from acknowledging that the first

²³⁹Krzysztof Kieślowski. Interview. *Three Colours: White*. Dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski. Artificial Eye. 2004

²⁴⁰ Kickasola, Joseph. p.280

²⁴¹ Ibid. p.282

²⁴² Haltof, Marek. 2004. p. 138

flashback to the wedding of Karol and Dominique could be interpreted as a flashforward does not refer to the chronological structure of the film. The fact that this is a directorial flashforward is a stronger method of announcing this structure than a subjective flashforward or flashback. A flashforward which originates with a character is understood by the audience to be part of that character's world view – rather than a deliberate choice of the director, which of course it is. Rather, a subjective flashforward, and in particular a subjective flashback is taken by the viewer as a scene which is indicative of the character's personality instead of one which indicates directorial presence. The other two flashforwards in *Three Colours: White* are subjective flashforwards. Both these flashforwards originate with Karol; they are a way of showing his planning process for Dominique's downfall that he is contemplating as he rebuilds his life in Warsaw. Both occur at critical points in Karol's new life, moments where he is deciding which path his life will take. Both feature Dominique entering a room. When the scene is played out in chronological order we discover that it shows Dominique entering her hotel room in Warsaw where Karol awaits her after his mock funeral.

The first subjective flashforward takes place shortly after Karol has survived his dramatic return to his homeland. He has travelled from Paris to Warsaw in his trunk, been beaten up by the baggage handlers who discover him when they steal the trunk. After this experience he makes his way to the hair-salon he co-owns with his brother Jurek. Broken and beaten he takes to the bed to recover his body and his spirit. The first action we see him undertake when he emerges from this period of recovery is the gluing back together of the statue he stole in Paris; the statue which resembles Dominique, which he travelled with in the trunk (the only object apart from his two-franc coin and his scissors which he possesses on arrival in Warsaw). He lovingly glues the pieces of this statue back together and in doing so he creates a very visible (though symbolic) presence of Dominique in Warsaw. The care and attention he gives to this piece of restoration reminds us of his love for Dominique. That despite her behaviour towards him: he loves her, desires her and wants her close to him.

The actions of the very next scene initially seem to contradict this expression of love that the statue represents. Kieślowski cuts from the restoration of the statue to a

shot of Karol standing beneath a bridge on the banks of the Vistula River about to hurl the two-franc coin into the water. His face is set, determined, his arm is thrown back in order to muster as much force as is possible into the throw. It is clear that he wants to put as much distance between himself and this coin as is humanely possible. This coin, along with the statue holds a symbolic significance for Karol. They are the only remaining links he has with Dominique and the coin is a stronger link than the statue. The statue he stole after his divorce, as its expression reminded him of his ex-wife. The coin was returned to him after he spoke to Dominique for the last time-its symbolic resonance is stronger for this very reason. So why does he attempt to hurl this coin into the Vistula with all his force? This action is not as it first appears a rejection of Dominique; rather it is a rejection of the knowledge that she is engaging in a new sexual relationship. The restoration of the statue shows us the ideal Dominique, a beautiful, immobile presence, untainted by any connections with the difficulties of their relationship. The coin on the other hand, while it is a talisman of his last conversation with Dominique, is also a reminder that during that phone call he heard Dominique reach orgasm with another man. Above all else then the coin represents Karol's inability to satisfy Dominique sexually. By throwing away the coin Karol hopes to throw away the knowledge that his inability to consummate their marriage has led to their divorce and Dominique's relationship with another man. He is throwing away his own humiliation and Dominique's victory. While the trilogy is thematically linked to the colours of the French flag and their symbolising of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity indicates that *Three Colours: White*, the middle film of the trilogy, is mostly concerned with equality, it is in fact concerned with a lived experience of equality which borders on inequality. Kieślowski states that the film is about humiliation and equality: "Humiliation is also the subject of the film people aren't and don't want to be equal."²⁴³ In throwing away the coin Karol throws away that sense of rejection and humiliation leaving him only with a symbol of Dominique (the statue) that is free of any of these connotations.

²⁴³ Kieślowski, Krzysztof. Interview. *Three Colours: White*. Dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski. Artificial Eye, 2004.

But, Karol does not succeed in throwing away the coin. The coin refuses to leave his palm; it sticks to his raised hand in defiance of the laws of gravity. And it is at this moment, when Karol is amazed, that despite the physical effort he has put into getting rid of this coin, it remains obstinately stuck to his hand, that the screen goes black and reopens on the first flashforward of Dominique entering the hotel room in Warsaw post-funeral. It appears from the order of these scenes that the first time Karol plans to get revenge on Dominique is at this very moment when he had decided to throw away the two-franc coin and all that it represents. When the coin (representing his humiliation and Dominique's victory) insists on staying with him he then begins to think of ways to reverse the meaning of the coin. He begins to plan for Dominique's humiliation and his subsequent victory over her. In the space of a moment then, the coin moves from being a symbol of Dominique's rejection of Karol to being a symbol of his desire to avenge this rejection. Better than throwing away the symbol of his humiliation, particularly if the symbol of humiliation wants to (literally) stick around, would be to move from humiliation to dominance. For what would be more enticing to those who are humiliated but to turn the tables on the source of that humiliation?

This first flashforward details an absolute shift in Karol's thinking about Dominique and his relationship with her. It shows us his imaginings of the fruition of a plan that he is just beginning to conceive and this plan gives the impetus to the rest of the events in this film. In order for Karol to coax Dominique to attend his funeral and begin to benefit from his will, he must earn sufficient money for him to have a suitable fortune to leave her in that will. The plan is put into effect immediately for in the very next scene Karol goes to work as a bodyguard for a black-marketer, stating in his brief interview that his reasons for doing so are that he wants "to get into the money business". Subsequent scenes show him double-crossing his boss in order to realise a huge profit on his real estate purchases. Of course Karol's motivation for getting into "the money business" can be read as stemming only from a desire to build himself up again after both his humiliation and his financial losses at the hands of Dominique. However, the fact that his efforts to amass a large fortune

begin only after this flashforward indicate that part of his motivation is a desire to get revenge on Dominique.

The second subjective flashforward also occurs at a moment of critical decision making for Karol. At this stage in the narrative he has bought some plots of land on which he hopes to make a profit. The next sequence of scenes show us Karol renewing his acquaintance with Mikolaj and enquiring if the position of well-paid killer for hire is still open. When Mikolaj responds that it is (although now based in Warsaw rather than in Paris) Karol accepts the job. The next scene is a shot of the two-franc coin spinning on the table and this is followed by the second and final flashforward of the film. In this scene Dominique has entered the hotel room and is moving through the corridor towards the bedroom. After this sequence Karol's attempts to establish his fortune intensify. In preceding this flashforward with a shot of the spinning two-franc coin, Kieślowski reinforces the link between Karol's desire for money and his desire to get revenge on Dominique. If the spinning of the coin indicates Karol's indecision as to whether or not to commit murder in order to increase his wealth, the flashforward which follows it seems to be the event which spurs him on. While he might recoil at the idea of murder, his desire for revenge is enough to quash any doubts he might have.

The second subjective flashforward functions as did the first one, as a motivational means for Karol to focus on becoming wealthy and to use that wealth to trick Dominique into returning to Warsaw in order for him to avenge his humiliation. Both subjective flashforwards are conscious acts on the part of Karol. While their intrusion into the narrative chronological flow of the film suggests (particularly for his first flashforward) that they are spur-of-the-moment thoughts, nevertheless, as their content details an act that he will carry out in the future, one that motivates his subsequent actions, a revenge that is planned and carefully orchestrated, these flashforwards emerge from the conscious and not the unconscious mind of the protagonist. Their relationship to the representation of the unconscious in this film depends on two things: their importance to the non-chronological structure of the film as a whole, and, the fact that their inclusion in the film springs from Karol's intense but unarticulated desire: both for Dominique and for revenge.

The Flashback

The film is book-ended by flashbacks to the wedding, both occurring at moments of heightened emotional involvement for the protagonists. Both begin with one protagonist and end with the other, the first begins with Karol and ends with Dominique, the second begins with Dominique, moves to Karol and ends with a white screen. The flashback represents the moment of ultimate happiness for both characters and also the moment of the end of that happiness (although they don't know this at the time). The moment of complete happiness arises from it being their wedding day and their joy is obvious in celebrating this event. That same moment also marks the demise of their relationship as the court proceedings tell us that the marriage was never consummated even though before they wed this was not a problem as Karol tells the court in his evidence. The flashback to the wedding then can be said to represent Eden before the fall: a moment in time when everything seemed to be perfect and the future looked promising. It also represents the day when Karol began to stop being able to make love with Dominique. This day then represents both desire and the end of desire. Both flashbacks present the same sequence of events except for one significant detail. In the second flashback we see Karol, and the couple kiss, or to put it in terms of absence or gap, in the first flashback we see only the bride, there is no groom, his absence, and thus the absence of the kiss which traditionally seals the marriage vows symbolises the absence that is to be a part of their marriage: the absence of sex.

The presence or absence of the kiss in the flashback sequences is indicative of Karol's desire for his wife and his ability or inability to act on that desire. The first flashback sequence begins in the present day with Karol in court. From this marker we can say that initially this flashback is Karol's. It originates as he is speaking to the judge and the contents of the flashback have a direct relationship to the question the judge has asked of him ("Was the marriage consummated that night?"). This question triggers Karol's memory of the wedding day whereas the second flashback begins with Dominique in the 'present day' and can be said to be in the main her memory of that event. In both flashbacks as Dominique walks down the aisle in order to exit the church the camera follows her from behind, when she leaves the

church she turns to face the camera: in the first flashback with a look of joyful recognition, in the second with a more serious expression. The position of the camera in these shots indicates that we are viewing Dominique from Karol's point of view. That the image we see of Dominique in these flashbacks is the memory image that Karol has of her on that day. Until the last moment in both flashbacks Karol maintains this position behind his new bride. Both his physical absence (for all of the first and most of the second flashback) and the fact that his position is represented as being behind his bride are indicative of Karol's state of mind in these moments. His position, or the representation of his position, tells us that he does not feel equal to his bride on their wedding day.

The first flashback ends with Dominique turning joyfully and expectantly towards the camera (representing Karol who is both present and absent). This turn of Dominique towards the camera shows us the actress Julie Delpy in all her radiant beauty. The lighting and styling of the moment emphasise this. Her beauty and radiance could not be in greater contrast to the extended presentation of Karol that we have just witnessed in the opening sequence. Here we see Karol after his fall but before he has reached rock bottom. He is dishevelled, wearing a dirty and ill-fitting overcoat, incapable of speaking or understanding French in court, even his own voice struggles to be heard. His words are presented to the court through a translator and he must suffer the indignity of hearing that his marriage was not consummated relayed to him by this stranger. The styling, lighting, costumes, mise-en-scene and duration of time given to each character presents a physical appearance that is unequal. As presented in the extended opening sequence, Karol is short, scruffy and hesitant. In the flashback to the wedding day Dominique is confident and beautiful. The mise-en-scene surrounding Karol is the busy streets of Paris, the cold imposing court building and the flock of pigeons, one of which defecates on his overcoat as he looks up to admire them. This positioning of the two characters, especially in the flashback sequence emphasises the inequality that exists between them, or rather the inequality that Karol imagines to exist between them. The fact that in his own memory of his wedding day Karol doesn't exist, doesn't have a physical presence is the strongest indication of this inequality.

The first flashback takes place while both characters are in the court room where Dominique has filed for the divorce of their marriage. The scene begins with Dominique explaining that her grounds for divorce are that the marriage wasn't consummated. Karol then asks for another chance and begins to explain that one night he was ready to consummate the marriage. The Judge asks if the marriage was consummated that night and we cut to Karol and before he answers we cut to the interior of a church and the start of the wedding flashback. We hear footsteps as the camera travels down the aisle and towards the open door at the back of the church. As it does Karol says "No" in response to the judge's question. This response and the fact that the flashback started with a medium shot of Karol points to the fact that it is his flashback – at least up until this point. We continue down the aisle after his response. Now the bride walks into view, her back facing the camera as she walks towards the open door, where a flock of pigeons are gathered. As she leaves the church she is greeted by well-wishers who throw confetti. She turns to face the camera, smiling, joyful, and the sound of pigeons increases on the soundtrack. We then cut to Dominique in the court room rising from her seat to address the court. This cut to Dominique in the 'present time' indicates that she too has partaken in the memory of the wedding day, especially as when we cut to her in the court room she rises from her seat and says "I beg your pardon?" to the judge as if in response to a question he has asked which she has not heard due to being caught up in the same reverie as Karol.

The second flashback to the wedding day occurs near the end of the film. Again it is ambiguous with regards to the ownership of the memory. It begins with Dominique, moves to Karol and ends in the abstract. Along with this question of ownership, Kieślowski also spreads this flashback across a greater span of time and space. Unlike the initial flashback which begins and ends in the court room and thus can have only taken the time of its own duration, the second flashback begins with Dominique being questioned in her hotel room about Karol's death and ends as Karol is preparing to visit her in prison. Therefore days if not months pass between the start and end of the flashback.

This flashback begins as Dominique sits at the desk in her hotel room beginning to realise the gravity of the situation that faces her, that of being accused of murder, and perhaps also coming to terms with Karol's betrayal. As she sits the sound of birds flapping their wings is heard on the soundtrack and we cut to the interior of a church once more. Again the camera moves down the aisle and Dominique comes into view in front of it. We then cut to a close up of Karol combing his hair. Although it is a close up and we have no mise-en-scene to guide us it is clear from the lighting and Karol's expression that we have moved from the flashback into another time and space. Karol passes the comb in front of his eyes and we cut back to the flashback, to Dominique leaving the church. We see the birds rise as she exits. This time when she turns to the camera her expression is serious. She purses her lips for a kiss and Karol enters from the left of the frame. They kiss and the screen dissolves into white. We then cut to Jurek, Karol's brother and Karol himself in the same position as before with the comb, getting ready to visit Dominique in prison.

This second flashback presents a more complicated structure of time than the first. It begins with Dominique's realisation that Karol has got his revenge and ends with Karol regretting that action and attempting to make amends for it. The time passed between the beginning and end of the flashback is much longer than the duration of the memory. This manipulation of time is significant in that it indicates the importance of the memory for both protagonists. In extending the flashback over a lengthy period of the 'present time' Kieślowski is showing the significance of memory, desire and emotion over everyday reality for his protagonists. Both flashbacks reflect the significance of the memory for the protagonists and that is the almost exclusive function that they have. These flashbacks do not exist in order to explain previous events or to act as a motivation for future events. Rather as a visual representation of a memory shared by both protagonists the flashback serves to indicate the importance of that memory to both Karol and Dominique.

Is the flashback sequence then an actual memory of events that took place? Perhaps it is similar to the general operation of memory: subjective, prone to the feelings and perspective of the person remembering. Although neither flashback belongs in its entirety to one character, the fact that the first flashback starts with

Karol and the second with Dominique is a strong indication that the first flashback 'belongs' more to Karol than Dominique and vice-versa. In the first flashback then we can say that we are shown Karol's subjective memory of his wedding day. He is absent from this event, reduced to the invisible role of following his bride out of the church. The presentation of Dominique in this sequence shows her to be the object of desire. Karol's absence from this scene shows that he feels incapable of either expressing his own or meeting his wife's desire.

The second flashback which begins with Dominique in the 'present day' can be said to be her memory for the most part, or, as with the first flashback, more her memory than Karol's. This memory occurs right at the moment when she realises that she has been tricked by Karol, that he has planned and executed a powerful revenge for her rejection of him. He has left her in Warsaw as she had left him in Paris: without language: speechless and facing the justice system alone. This is the "happy ending" flashback, it ends with a kiss which seals the marriage and it is a prelude to Dominique's indication that she wants to remarry Karol. The fact that the "happy ending" flashback occurs after Karol has reduced Dominique to a state of helplessness before the law and that this flashback originates with Dominique indicates the power struggle within their marriage and the outcome that both want in order to resolve that power struggle.

Both flashbacks are powerful indications of how desire works. If the representation of love, hate, equality and revenge is illustrated in a fairly straightforward manner in the main "present day" part of the film, the two flashbacks show us the root of desire for both protagonists and thus the underlying, un-stated, unconscious cause of everything else that follows. In *Three Colours: White*, unlike *Three Colours: Blue*, the representation of the unconscious is not made on a regular basis throughout the film. For the most part this film is presented as a representation of the conscious acts of the protagonists. Unlike the screen washes in *Three Colours: Blue*, there are no mysterious events throughout *Three Colours: White* which represent the unconscious. Rather, in this film, the representation of the unconscious is concentrated into the flashbacks which bookend the film, with occasional

references to these memories at times of heightened emotion throughout the main part of the film.

Karol's physical absence from the first flashback is a clear way of representing his unconscious. While it is not unusual for a character to be invisible in their own flashback (the presentation of events in these flashbacks usually being subjective often demands that we see these events through the eyes of a character, that the camera takes the position of the character and thus the character is not visibly present) it is both Karol's positioning here, as represented by the camera and his physical absence that work together to represent his unconscious. His positioning behind his bride where he has full view of her radiant, confident stride out of the church shows us his image of Dominique at this moment. While Karol remains in the same position (behind Dominique) in the second flashback there is a subtle difference in Dominique's position which indicates how Karol's memory has altered according to all the events which have occurred since their divorce. In this second flashback Dominique's movements are slower; she walks with a more hesitant step and thus appears closer to the observing Karol than in the first flashback where her stride took her rapidly away from him. Sound is also used to great effect in distinguishing the different meanings the same memory can evoke depending on perspective. In the first flashback the sound of Dominique's heels on the stone floor of the church is exaggerated. It is a sharp, rapid, rhythmic noise that emphasises her confidence and power. In the second flashback this sound is muted, the same footsteps are soft on the flagstones, they have slowed down. Karol's physical absence from the first flashback also represents his unconscious feelings at that time. This first flashback begins with Karol in the present day, therefore it is more his memory of those events than Dominique's. It ends with Dominique turning to face the camera, an act we know from the second flashback that results in the kiss between her and Karol. In the court room Karol doesn't allow himself to recall this moment, he stops the memory at the point when Dominique turns to him expectantly. His absence at this moment, his refusal to remember the kiss represents his unconscious hesitancy about acting on his desire for his new wife.

Language

In each film of the trilogy Kieślowski attempts to point towards an aspect of life that is not easily represented visually. Acknowledging what he felt was the difficulty that film had in representing this aspect of our existence he states in an interview conducted after the making of *Three Colours: Red*:

...film is very materialistic: all you can photograph, most of the time, is *things*. You can describe a soul, but you can't photograph it; you have to find an equivalent. But there isn't really an equivalent. Film is helpless when it comes to describing the soul, just as it is describing many other things, like a state of consciousness. You have to find methods, tricks, which may be more or less successful in making it understood that this is what your film is about. And some people may like those tricks, others may not.

I'm frustrated by the literalism of film; I'd like to escape that. To a certain degree maybe I have managed to do so in the last few films, but only to a certain degree. And now I can't find any more possibilities; the camera is of no help.²⁴⁴

He nevertheless persevered in the attempt throughout his career, and in the trilogy it is not only the main focus of the films it is also his most determined effort to utilise the medium of film to find expression for those aspects of human experience that are not easily expressed visually.

In the first two films of the trilogy he presents the unconscious of the protagonists through a combination of aural and visual motifs. In *Three Colours: Blue* we gain access to Julie's unconscious processes by the connections made clear at the start of the film between the music of "The Concert for the Unification of Europe" and her repressed grief and creativity. These aural indicators of the presence of the unconscious are accompanied by a blue wash that fills the screen (this colour specifically connects with her daughter Anna whose loss Julie cannot accept) and by an editing technique whereby the screen fades to black immediately after this shift between conscious and unconscious thought, only to return again to the same image and the same point in time immediately prior to the fade to black. In this film then, we have three clear pointers towards that moment when the unconscious breaks

²⁴⁴ Andrew, Geoff. *The 'Three Colours' Trilogy*. London: BFI Publishing, 2005. p. 82

through conscious thought: the music from the concert, the blue wash that fills the screen and the fade to black. Each of these techniques are used only in those moments when Julie's attempts to keep mourning and creativity at bay breakdown. By limiting their use to these specific moments Kieslowski isolates them as techniques that are specific in this film to the representation of the unconscious.

In *Three Colours: White*, visual and aural indicators are also used to denote the presence of the unconscious of the protagonist. In this film the visuals take the form of a flashback to the wedding day of Karol and Dominique and a flashforward to their reunion. As in *Three Colours: Blue* these shifts in time occur at moments of great emotional upheaval for Karol the main protagonist (at his divorce proceedings, on his return to Warsaw). The aural indicators of the presence of the unconscious are dispersed throughout the film and take the form of the sound and image of pigeons cooing and flapping. At the start of the film we see that this sound is connected to Karol and Dominique's wedding day. Like *Three Colours: Blue* this film is thematically interested in the process of human memory. In the first film Kieslowski explored what happens when memory is repressed, indicating that to be fully human we cannot wipe clean the slate of the past and start over anew, the past and our memory of it is inextricably linked to our present. In *Three Colours: White* it is specifically that connection between past and present that Kieslowski is trying to explore. Here it is the noise of the pigeons on the soundtrack that indicate Karol's continuous desire for Dominique. The continuous use of the aural indicator of the unconscious and the repetition of images in the visual indicator of the unconscious in this film weave through the depiction of the conscious life of the protagonist indicating the significance of his memories on his present life.

In the final film of the trilogy; *Three Colours: Red* Kieslowski both changes and moderates his preference for representing the unconscious through aural and visual motifs. Rather than alluding to some past event (the pigeons in *Three Colours: White*) or indicating a repressed talent and grief (the music in *Three Colours: Blue*), in this film the aural takes the form of four conversations between Valentine and Joseph Kerns. In these four scenes the aural consists not only of the dialogue between the two characters but also the sound of interruptions by other people and

events. The aural here is not just the words that pass between Joseph and Valentine it is also the sounds (both verbal and non-verbal) that occur throughout these conversations. These sounds along with the gaps and hesitations that occur in the dialogue indicate the presence of the unconscious of each character.

There are two ways in which the conversations between Valentine and Joseph work to represent the unconscious on screen: the dialogue itself and the structure of the scenes. Both methods are interlinked. Each character speaks with a mixture of hesitations and declarations, their speech is full of stops and starts and is elliptical in nature, indicative of omissions and gaps. The unconscious is represented here both in what the characters say – but more importantly in how they say it. Each conversation between Joseph and Valentine is also interrupted by outside events. This has a two-fold effect as a technique to represent the unconscious. Firstly it is a way of breaking the dialogue between the two characters, and this gives rise to a diagetically motivated gap in speech. Secondly, and more importantly, these outside events often function to illustrate the unconscious of either Joseph or Valentine. This is perhaps the most developed method of representing the unconscious in film, unacknowledged desires and memories co-exist on screen with the everyday reality of the characters.

Lacan and language

Thus the way that the subject gives an account of himself, with all his hesitations and omissions, his imaginary formations such as dreams, delusions and phobias, and his moments of incoherence, are phenomena which reveal the mental life of the individual. They are what one could call the significant fragments of the subject's life.²⁴⁵

In one of his earliest papers (“Beyond the reality principle”, 1936) on the function of language in psychoanalysis, Lacan began to examine the relationship between language and meaning. Introducing a term which he would develop in later works he began to examine the idea that language begins to have meaning when it is addressed to someone, an interlocutor. Language for Lacan is always directed towards a listener, the speaker talks with intentionality. The person to whom the language is directed is the interlocutor and it is only with his/her presence that language starts to

²⁴⁵ Benvenuto, Bice, and Roger Kennedy. p.70

have a meaning for the speaker. Meaning however lies in what is behind the actual words that are said. In a clinical psychoanalytical setting, the words that the patient insists on speaking indicate to the analyst the patient's imago: "...the imago is the sum of the various prototypical images which, arising from infancy, remains the subject's more or less fixed projection on the world and others".²⁴⁶ The words that are actually spoken indicate and reinforce the concept that the patient has of themselves in the world. This is the imago. In a clinical situation, the analyst functions as the patient's interlocutor, the patient presents themselves as imago. It is only in this speaker/listener relationship that language acquires its meaning according to Lacan. There are two types of meaning associated with this relationship. Firstly, there is the meaning that is for Lacan the surface statement of self that is the imago. In having an interlocutor, the patient says "I am", or rather "This is who I like to think I am". This is the first step in understanding the meaning of language for Lacan: that language is addressed to someone and that it involves a statement of self. Secondly, the speaker/listener relationship invokes a deeper meaning: in the clinical situation the analyst is aware of the patient's insistence on presenting their imago and attempts through various methods to discover what lies beneath this presentation of self. The analyst cannot avoid the position of interlocutor as all language is addressed to someone, what the analyst must do is recognise that she/he as interlocutor is merely taking the place of the patient's Other.

Three Colours: Red and language

The scenes of conversation between Valentine and Joseph work to challenge Valentine's imago. In these dialogues she presents her "more or less fixed projection on the world and others." At the same time her speech is hesitant and contains gaps, gaps which are often filled visually by Kieślowski, this element of her dialogue reveals "the significant fragments of the subject's life." These four scenes and the conversations that take place within them anchor this film due to the character exposition that occurs within them. The first of these conversations takes place when Valentine brings Rita, Joseph's injured dog to his home, the second after Rita has run

²⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 73

off on Valentine, and she goes to Joseph's house looking for her. In this scene Valentine discovers that Joseph listens to his neighbour's telephone calls and Joseph learns of Valentine's family difficulties. Both are openly hostile to each other in this their second meeting. The second such scene takes place in Joseph's house again. This time a truce has been called in the hostilities, which leads to a budding friendship over the course of an evening. The final of their three conversations takes place in a theatre after Valentine's fashion show. Here their budding friendship begins to develop.

Apart from these conversations with Joseph, Valentine is almost silent throughout the rest of the film. Her other dialogues are either with characters who never appear on screen: Michel, Marc, her mother, Marie, or they are brief and perfunctory conversations of a practical nature: with her landlord, the proprietor of the Chez Joseph café, the photographer for the chewing gum ad. Joseph Kerns then functions in this film as Valentine's interlocutor. He is the only significant on-screen presence that she addresses. Valentine also provides the same function for Joseph. Apart from four brief scenes, of which only one contains other people, the entirety of Joseph's screen time is shared with Valentine. And apart from one brief, practical phone call; she is the only person he talks with in this film. While Valentine does speak to other characters apart from Joseph, these conversations are never of any length and, apart from her telephone conversations with Michel, neither are they of any depth. The relative silence of Valentine for most of this film allows Kieślowski to present a character that we get to know through her actions rather than her words.

The conversations between Joseph and Valentine in *Three Colours: Red* are the moments in the film when the unconscious of each character is revealed through language. These conversations are the only sections of dialogue of any length in the film. In the second conversation the dialogue is broken by the telephone calls which Joseph is eavesdropping on, in the third by Kieślowski cutting to Auguste's failing relationship with Karin and in the fourth by the intervention of the storm and the interruption of the theatre's caretaker. These physical interruptions allow Kieślowski to break up the flow of the conversation: by introducing these events Joseph and Valentine must stop talking with each other, when they begin again after the

interruption they often are taking on a different topic, leaving the audience with a sense of a gap or a rupture in the dialogue.

The first conversation: presenting the imago

In *Three Colours: Red*, the four conversations scenes present both Joseph and Valentine's imago or image of self. They also present each character acting as interlocutor for the other. The first and briefest conversation is an introduction to the imago of both characters but most specifically Joseph as this is the first time he appears in the film. The dialogue occurs as Valentine tells Joseph that she has just run over his dog Rita. Joseph's indifferent response is a pure presentation of his imago: that of an embittered misanthrope. Both his words and their delivery are a pure presentation of the self he believes himself to be:

Valentine: Excuse me the door was open. I'm sorry. I ran over your dog. Rita.
A German shepherd.
Joseph: That's possible. She disappeared yesterday.
Valentine: She's in my car. Alive. I don't know what to do. Should I take her to
a veterinarian?
Joseph: As you wish.
Valentine: If I ran over your daughter, would you be so indifferent?
Joseph: I have no daughter, Miss. Go away.

Joseph's response here is a non-response. His pressing urge is to present himself to Valentine as someone who has no interest in anything. He is neither interested in Valentine's act of kindness nor the injury to his dog. In this brief conversation he manages in each response to Valentine to present and reinforce his imago. His calm "That's possible. She disappeared yesterday" as a reaction to the news of the dog's injury is utterly disengaged. His response to the suggestion of taking her to the vet "As you wish" abstracts himself from the decision and in doing so further presents his imago as that of someone who doesn't care about anything. When we come to his final words "Go away" they are not entirely unexpected. His imago, his presentation of the self is that of someone who wants no contact with the world. Everyone, his dog, the kind stranger, should go away and leave him alone to eavesdrop on his neighbour's telephone conversations. We get some indication as to what has formed this imago in his final remarks "I have no daughter". Later we will learn that a

betrayal by a former lover and an erroneous judgement combined to make him lose his faith in humanity.

It is significant to the representation of the unconscious in this film that that information about Joseph comes later in the film. In talking about the film Kieślowski stated: “In “Red” particularly, we wanted the viewer to think backwards to make associations with things he had already seen without noticing.”²⁴⁷ In this case Kieślowski is talking about visual images, places, locations, but his statement is equally applicable to knowledge of characters as well as knowledge of spaces. In this first conversation we are presented with Joseph’s imago and also with the beginning of what lies beneath that imago, but it is not until later in the film when more is revealed about the character that we make the association with the information we were first given and what we now know.

Imago and interlocutor: the second conversation

This is the most significant conversation for the presentation of the imago of both characters and for the positioning of each as the interlocutor of the other. Here Valentine’s imago begins to crack and we begin to see what lies beneath her image of herself. In this first long conversation between the two characters we also have two other ways of representing the unconscious. Firstly, through the language, the dialogue itself. Each character, but especially Valentine speaks with pauses and hesitations. This manner of speaking reveals the unconscious of the character. Pauses, hesitations, uncertainties, stumbles are a method according to Lacan of an insight into the individual person. It is at these moments of hesitations, where language seems to fail that the unconscious presents itself.

The position of interlocutor works differently for each character. Because we see Valentine talk with other characters, Joseph is not the only character that she addresses. But, for Joseph, Valentine is his only interlocutor. The relative silence of Valentine throughout most of this film places a particular emphasis on the conversations she has with Joseph. It is through these talks that we get a glimpse into the unconscious of both characters. However, when we do hear Valentine speak at

²⁴⁷ Kieślowski, Krzysztof. Interview. *Three Colours: Red*. Dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski. Artificial Eye, 2004.

length in the first of these conversations, her speech lacks fluidity: she stumbles, hesitates, pauses. It is not a confident articulation of the self; rather it is a moment of confrontation with the self, as that self is reflected back to her by Joseph, her interlocutor. Her first conversation with Joseph is the most confrontational. It places them both at opposite ends of a spectrum of how to live in the world. It begins with Joseph throwing down one of his many challenges to Valentine, these acts always test Valentine's own view of herself and how she operates in the world. The challenge is to enter his house and seek him out, and thus to show her desire to continue the conversation.

Joseph's challenges to Valentine combined with his continual articulations of his self as a misanthrope demand a response from Valentine. However, such is his wording of these challenges and articulations that her response is limited by the very way in which they are presented. She comes to him initially as the angel of mercy: she has his injured dog in her car. The role of 'do-gooder' is further imposed on her by Joseph when he shows no interest in the animal and Valentine is forced to take Rita to the vet and then keep her. The first time she returns to his house in search of the missing Rita Joseph demands that she present this personality trait once more. He forces her to approach a stranger with disturbing information, suggests that she do another stranger's shopping and tells her that she only rescued Rita in order for her to avoid feeling guilty. Throughout this initial confrontation he forces Valentine to prove that she is kind, considerate, caring. He demands that she acts on those virtues and when she does he points out the futility of those actions. Not surprisingly Valentine leaves his house in tears. It is clear from later conversations that they have and from Valentine's interactions apart from Joseph that he has correctly guessed her own understanding of herself and that aspect of self that she values most and wants to present to the world.

However, Joseph's insistence in their first conversation that she consistently display those characteristics leaves very little room for the any other aspect of Valentine's personality to emerge. He goads her to do the right thing and encourages her into condemning his own actions. As he describes himself as evil, he demands that she will be good. For the most part Valentine responds according to the image

she has of herself which Joseph is now challenging. She attempts to alert his neighbour to the fact that his calls are being listened to, she blocks her ears to the next call and justifies her reasons for helping out the old lady. However, this unrelenting pressure to live up to her own imago, or rather to defend that imago, to present it under conditions of duress eventually causes that imago to crack and another aspect of Valentine's personality to be revealed.

The crucial moment occurs when Joseph presents her with a neighbour who is more evil than himself. He shows her the only person whose calls he can't listen to: a drug dealer whose phone uses a different wavelength. His being a drug dealer alone might not be enough to provoke Valentine, but, as we learn later, her younger brother is a heroin addict. The combination of the pressure from Joseph to defend her imago and the appearance of this neighbour who is connected to her brother's suffering unite to allow Valentine's outer projection of self to crack. She asks Joseph for this man's telephone number, calls him, and says: "You deserve to die", and then hangs up. Immediately she turns to Joseph and asks: "What did I do?"

It is as if she had asked "Who am I?" The existence of the drug dealer challenges Valentine's conception of herself, or rather her reaction to his existence does so. Before she is aware of it she has condemned him to death, a reaction that is at odds with the understanding that she has of herself as a kind, understanding and caring woman. Her imago begins to crack at this moment, faced with such a monstrous human being who is probably having a direct effect on her brother's life she can no longer be who she thinks she is. In this situation a more authentic Valentine comes to the fore, a less controlled, angry Valentine. Her desire to do good, which is shown throughout the film, is no match for this more basic, more primitive feeling of anger and resentment.

As the narrative progresses we discover that Valentine's brother's drug taking originated one year previously when he discovered that he was "not his father's son". Valentine's own relationship with her absent boyfriend Michel is deteriorating due to his petty jealousies. These are the events in her world which make it difficult to be a "good" person, or to believe in the good that exists in others. The conflict that arises from the difficulties in her family and romantic relationships is placed directly against

her imago of herself as someone who is good and who wants to do good in the world when she is confronted with the drug dealer. The imago, the presentation of self, both to the self and to the world cannot sustain the tension caused by this event and it cracks. There is a gap and through this gap we get another sense of who Valentine is: we get a glimpse into her unconscious.

Immediately after Valentine rings the drug dealer the final telephone call broadcasts through Joseph's house. The subject of this call is guaranteed to appeal to Valentine. It is a call from an elderly woman to her daughter. The woman is lonely and uses various methods to try to get her daughter to visit. Joseph suggests that Valentine helps this woman, suggesting it as a method for Valentine herself to feel better after listening to such plaintive demands. He then goes on to suggest that the only reason she helped Rita was to prevent herself from feeling guilty about the accident. He asks her directly: "Who did you do it for?" implying that all acts are selfishly motivated and that Valentine is naive to believe otherwise. Valentine is thus forced to defend her position as a kind, considerate person in the light of this attack. However, this is more difficult to do this time after she has witnessed that aspect of her personality shatter when confronted by the drug dealer. This time Valentine is more hesitant in her response to Joseph. She speaks in broken, unfinished sentences: "People aren't bad...It's not true...They may be weak sometimes....." Her language isn't as robust as earlier when she directly asked him to stop eavesdropping. Initially she states "It's disgusting". When she returns from his neighbour's house she asks him quite clearly: "Don't do this anymore." Later again she tells him: "Everyone deserves a private life." This time her convictions have been rocked by her own actions. Her image of herself has had to expand to take in another perspective: her ability to be ruthless and mean when the occasion calls for it. Yet, despite this new vision of herself that is beginning to make itself felt just before she leaves Joseph's house, she manages to respond to him in a way that shows that while her initial image of herself may have become 'cracked' by events that afternoon, it is still the image of herself that she most believes in and the one that she is secure in presenting to the world.

Her hesitant speech and words show that this image has been challenged by her reaction to the drug dealer, but, at the same time, her determination to contradict Joseph's view of the world, to present a less misogynistic view of human nature in the face of such an attack by Joseph indicates that her image of herself has a basis in reality. While it might be the way she wants to present herself to the world, the fact that she can continue to hold such a position (though tentatively at this moment) indicates that this is not just an image that she wants to project to the world, but that it is also a core part of her being.

The second conversation: filling in the gaps

The second time Valentine and Joseph meet is when Valentine returns to his house to seek the missing Rita. In this meeting she discovers that Joseph eavesdrops on his neighbour's telephone conversations, a discovery that Joseph intends her to make. Their conversation is frequently interrupted by these outside voices as Joseph has linked them to a loudspeaker device and they reverberate throughout the house. These interruptions force a diegetic gap in the conversation between Valentine and Joseph, when an eavesdropped call comes through Joseph's system both characters stop talking. Each outside interruption is a visual and/or aural representation of the unconscious of Valentine. These interruptions, these physical gaps in the conversations are moments when the unconscious of this character is represented on screen. While there is a sense of a gap or rupture in the dialogue: there is of course no gap or rupture in the film. As the conversation is stopped the film continues on. When Joseph and Valentine's dialogue is interrupted by an outside presence: they may stop talking, but we, the audience continue to watch a series of events unfold on screen. These visual and/or aural interruptions are used by Kieślowski to present what is being unsaid in these conversations. He uses these moments to give the audience an insight into the unconscious of Valentine.

There are four of these telephone calls and each of them corresponds to an emotion Valentine is experiencing but will not admit to. This is a particularly inventive way of depicting the unconscious in film. On screen we watch Joseph and Valentine while at the same time we listen to a disembodied voice discuss lust, love and guilt. Between the second and the third phone call another interruption is made

when Valentine telephones the drug dealer: the topic of this interruption is anger. Joseph Kickasola describes these topics and their affect on Valentine as follows:

...the first addresses a form of desire (and betrayal), the second discusses love and sex (“romantic,” the Judge says), and the third illustrates a clear-cut case of wrongdoing, and the fourth represents a conventional family drama about a mother and daughter...Each scenario appeals to a different sensibility in Valentine (the first to her idealisation of privacy, the second to her need for romance, the third to her bitterness about her brother, and the fourth to her compassion). In every case, the Judge seeks to complicate her ideals on these topics – to throw her into an ethical tailspin and see if she can retain her identity (her compassionate essence).²⁴⁸

Kickasola’s description of these topics as appealing to a different sensibility in Valentine: privacy, romance, bitterness, and compassion, while accurate, does not indicate how these overheard conversations represent Valentine’s unconscious. Valentine is consciously aware that she values privacy, and his description of the second call as appealing to “her need for romance” misreads romance for Valentine’s deeper need for love. There is no evidence in the film that Valentine is bitter about her brother; rather her conversation with him indicates a mixture of sibling love and hate. Kickasola’s indication that the final conversation appeals to her compassion again indicates Valentine’s conscious rather than unconscious knowledge as he indicates in the final sentence above. Valentine is aware that she is compassionate, in fact it forms a large part of her self-image; Kickasola himself equates her identity with her compassionate essence. Her identity as a compassionate person is challenged by the topics of these calls as they present her with unconscious desires and wishes – lust, love, anger, and guilt – which she keeps hidden from herself.

As these disembodied voices come from the telephone which is hooked up to Joseph’s hi-fi system they are simultaneously present and not present in the same room as Joseph and Valentine. It is a way of making the unconscious thoughts of Valentine as equally manifest in the scene as her conscious words. Each of these topics: lust, love, anger and guilt are emotions that are experienced by Valentine: but crucially, they are emotions that she will not admit to possessing. The strength of

²⁴⁸ Kickasola, Joseph. p.309

these particular emotions is overpowering for her; she can't openly acknowledge them.

By presenting these emotions as originating from other characters in the film Kieślowski allows these emotions to be expressed: to be present on the screen, while at the same time (as they are not expressed by the characters themselves) he allows them to be concealed. This method of representing the unconscious on screen is a good imitation of the working of the unconscious. That which is uncomfortable (in Freud's terminology "unpleasurable") to the conscious mind is forbidden from receiving direct expression. Here Kieślowski finds an alternative means of expressing these difficult emotions by bypassing the characters to which the emotions belong and by having another character give voice to them. The fact that in this sequence these other characters do not appear on screen gives greater impact to their words and the theme of these phone calls. While we listen to them talk we *watch* Valentine and Joseph. The words from these disembodied voices form the first link to Joseph and Valentine's unconscious. It prepares us for making the second link that between the topics of these phone calls and a greater understanding of the two protagonists. These emotions on screen, articulated through characters that are not visible, show us Valentine's unconscious desires and wants. Desires that are rebuffed by her current boyfriend and desires that she appears to have decided to live without for the time being. These desires and wishes are never consciously stated or acted on by Valentine: their presentation during gaps in her conversation with Joseph shows us that they are a part of her unconscious wishes.

This chapter has examined a variety of methods used by filmmakers to represent the unconscious of a character on screen: colour, sound, mise-en-scene, editing and dialogue. The use of colour washes in *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* is an inventive method of representing the return of the repressed of the protagonists in these films. The colours (red and blue) refer in an oblique way to the original trauma suffered by these characters, an imitation of the disguise used by repressed matter to enter consciousness. The short duration of screen time allocated to these colour washes evokes the sensation of consciousness being overpowered by the unconscious repressed material. When Marnie and Julie's world fills with red and blue their

unconscious self has broken through to consciousness in disguise. The use of sound in *Three Colours: Blue* performs a similar function to the use of the blue colour wash. The music of “The Concert for the Unification of Europe” represents Julie’s repressed creativity. Like the colour wash its appearance in the film indicates a momentary return of the repressed.

Placing items in the mise-en-scene is a subtle but significant method of representing that which is latent. In *Three Colours: White* the statuette and the pigeons have a solid physical presence on screen. As physical objects they are an acknowledged part of Karol’s world. However, their function as repositories of his desire for his ex-wife is not acknowledged and in this way they operate to indicate the latency of this desire. The use of editing to manipulate the presentation of time on screen is a technique that is unique to the medium of film. Linear time is the domain of consciousness only, the unconscious deals with past, present and future simultaneously. Editing between present time on screen, flashforwards and flashbacks allows a director to imitate this aspect of the unconscious.

Of all the techniques used to represent a character’s unconscious dialogue is the most complex. In *Three Colours: Red* there are two methods whereby dialogue represents the unconscious of the protagonist. The initial method is in the actual dialogue itself and its reproduction by the actress (Irene Jacob). These words are hesitant, there are noticeable gaps in sentences and sentences often do not finish. This presentation is imitative of a Lacanian understanding of the unconscious whereby the unconscious “speaks” in those gaps. Alongside the actual dialogue Kieślowski presents the “gaps”. Pauses in the dialogue are filled with overhead phone calls; the topic of each representing the repressed desires and wishes of the protagonist.

Chapter Five: Narrative

“...all the characters function animated by impulses”²⁴⁹

This chapter examines the structure of narrative fiction films whose main events and actions originate from the unconscious of the protagonist. As the majority of fiction films contain events which originate in the conscious actions of the protagonists, and as these motivations and subsequent events are clearly depicted within each film, it is the object of this chapter to discover the impact on the sequencing of a narrative of the introduction of unconscious motivation. One film from each director has been chosen for analysis: Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou* (1929), Hitchcock's *Marnie* (1964) and Kieślowski's *Three Colours: Blue* (1993). These particular films have been chosen because their narrative events are to a great degree instigated by the unconscious activities of the relevant protagonists. In Buñuel's film both main characters respond and act according to their unconscious desires. In Hitchcock's *Marnie*, the titular heroine's actions, from stealing from Mr. Strutt, to moving city and gaining new employment in Rutland's, to her marriage to Mark Rutland are all motivated by the trauma of having killed a sailor as a child, the memory of which lies repressed and is thus inaccessible to her conscious mind. In *Three Colours: Blue* the protagonist's actions are inspired by her determination to repress the grief and loss at the death of her husband and child. This very active repression is however only partially successful and it exists alongside the more established repression of her creative talents as a composer. *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* contain a series of events for which the underlying cause is withheld for the most part from the audience; for example, we learn of Marnie's initial trauma only at the end of the film. Only in *Un Chien Andalou* are the events and their unconscious origins presented almost simultaneously or at least directly after each other. The reason for this is the difference in intention that distinguishes Buñuel's film from that of Hitchcock and

²⁴⁹ Buñuel, Luis. 2000. p. 250

Kieślowski, and this intent has repercussions upon the narrative structure of each film.

In writing the script for *Un Chien Andalou* Buñuel and Dalí borrowed from their own dreams and made a deliberate effort to avoid writing any sequence which would follow a logical pattern:

Our only rule was very simple: No idea or image that might lend itself to a rational explanation of any kind would be accepted. We had to open all doors to the irrational and keep only those images that surprised us, without trying to explain why.²⁵⁰

We imagined that film together, when we were still friends. Dalí had dreamed about a pierced hand with ants crawling out of it, and I about a sliced eye. We went on that way, now taking images from our dreams, now looking for others, which we retained only if they didn't correspond to anything we already knew.²⁵¹

By these means they hoped to fulfil their intention of making a film which would represent the operations of the unconscious and thus become members of the Surrealist movement, a movement which valued the elevation of the irrational in all creative work. This intention to portray only the irrational in *Un Chien Andalou* had a profound effect on the narrative structure of this film. It led to a labyrinthine structure whereby one event triggered another according to the operations of the unconscious mind of one or other of the main characters. Events in this film follow a cause and effect pattern only if we understand the cause to be the unconscious desires of the protagonists. The narrative structure of this film is therefore wholly determined by the operations of the unconscious. Hitchcock and Kieślowski take a more traditional approach to the construction of a narrative. While the most significant events in *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* are determined by the unconscious activities of the respective protagonists, these films, unlike *Un Chien Andalou* are not driven only by these activities, rather they have a narrative superstructure which frames the film and is not reliant on the unconscious activities of the protagonists. *Marnie* tells the story of a successful kleptomaniac who is finally

²⁵⁰Buñuel, Luis. 2003. p.104

²⁵¹Buñuel, Luis. 2000. p. 258

caught, *Three Colours: Blue* the story of a woman starting a new life after a bad car accident. The narrative superstructure of these films lends them a certain traditional coherency which is lacking in *Un Chien Andalou*. Certain events and occurrences follow on logically from each other in *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue*. For example, in order to avoid capture after robbing Strutt's office Marnie must change her appearance and move to a new city. Similarly in *Three Colours: Blue*, Julie's desire to start a new life begins with her moving to Paris. However, within this superstructure significant events are motivated by the unconscious and this leads to a situation in these films whereby the most significant element of motivation for character actions is withheld for most of the film and the significance of the narrative is only completely understood retrospectively. According to Freud, many unconscious processes remain hidden from consciousness; it is only through the process of psychoanalysis that their significance is revealed. At the same time unconscious processes while hidden, insist on being expressed, in order to achieve expression they must disguise themselves to bypass the censorship function of consciousness²⁵². This method of hidden processes and disguised expression by which the unconscious operates indicates that while the impact of unconscious processes on the individual is quite significant, the meaning of those processes is often inaccessible except through the method of psychoanalysis. If this is the case with the individual human being then it becomes clear that representing the unconscious in film will involve the use of a narrative structure that manages to convey both the impact and the elusiveness of unconscious processes without running the risk of alienating the audience by an unclear representation of these hidden processes. Freud's work on the functioning of the unconscious and the process of repression is important to the understanding of the narrative structures of the films under discussion in this chapter.

Drives, repression and disguise

One significant way in which Sigmund Freud distinguishes the unconscious from the conscious mind is through the distinction of their ruling principles. In his 1911 paper "Formulations on the Two Principles of Psychic Functioning" he states that the

²⁵² Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XV.

unconscious is ruled by what he terms the pleasure principle and that the conscious mind is ruled by what he terms the reality principle. He states that psychoanalysts take the unconscious as their starting point, believing that the processes of the unconscious are “older, primary psychic processes”²⁵³ from which all subsequent psychic development originated. He goes on to state that initially the psyche satisfied its desires without any reference to reality, through hallucination. It was only when hallucination failed that this means of satisfaction was abandoned. He states that at this point:

...the psychical apparatus had to decide to form a conception of the real circumstances in the external world and to endeavour to make a real alteration in them. A new principle of mental functioning was thus introduced; what was presented in the mind was no longer what was agreeable but what was real, even if it happened to be disagreeable.²⁵⁴

This new principle is the reality principle, formulated when the psyche became aware of the outside world and began to alter its behaviour according to that knowledge. It is at this stage that the distinction between the unconscious and the conscious mind becomes clear. The recognition of the outside world causes the psyche to develop and this development instigates a division of the psyche between the conscious mind which is now ruled by the reality principle and the unconscious mind which continues to be ruled by the pleasure principle.

In order to understand the psychoanalytical meaning of repression and the return of the repressed which is the main element of the unconscious represented in the films discussed in this chapter we must look at two other papers by Freud: “Instincts and their Vicissitudes” (1915) and “Repression” (1915). In the first of these papers Freud describes what he terms “drives” that is to say strong internal desires which seek only to be satisfied. These can be divided into two categories; the ego or self-preservation drives and the sexual drives. For Freud, the significance of these drives is that they are primal entities whose aim is always satisfaction and which operate on the psyche as a constant force. This brings about conflict when the satisfaction of

²⁵³Freud, Sigmund. “Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning.” *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. Vol. XII. London: The Hogarth Press. (1953-1974) p. 219

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

these “drives” or desires clashes with the operation of the reality principle. It is at this point that these drives suffer one of four possible fates; reversal into the opposite, turning back on the self, repression and sublimation. In his paper on repression, Freud states that when the reality principle refuses the satisfaction of the drive, that is when the drive is subjected to resistance, that in certain cases the drive then enters the state of repression, that is a state between flight and disapproval. The precondition for the state of repression then is that the satisfaction of the drive would bring unpleasure instead of pleasure. He argues:

...that the satisfaction of an instinct which is under repression would be quite possible, and further, that in every instance such a satisfaction would be pleasurable in itself; but it would be irreconcilable with other claims and intentions. It would, therefore, cause pleasure in one place and unpleasure in another. It has consequently become a condition for repression that the motive force of unpleasure shall have acquired more strength than the pleasure obtained from satisfaction. Psycho-analytic observation of the transference neuroses, moreover, leads us to conclude that repression is not a defensive mechanism which is present from the very beginning, and that it cannot arise until a sharp cleavage has occurred between conscious and unconscious mental activity – that *the essence of repression lies simply in turning something away, and keeping it at a distance, from the conscious.*²⁵⁵

The initial stage of repression occurs when the drive is forbidden from entering consciousness. The drive itself remains unchanged. The second stage of repression, what Freud calls “actual repression” occurs when ideas or thoughts associated with the drive undergo the same experience as the drive itself. For repression to occur two factors are necessary: the initial refusal of entry to consciousness and the urge that the drive has to enter consciousness. The drive itself remains unchanged always, what alters is the mode of expression as a result of its attempts to be expressed, to be satisfied. These occur only in its relationship to consciousness. It attempts to present itself to consciousness in disguise in order to gain entry into that psychic system. Freud describes the effect of these attempts as follows:

...if a drive representative is removed by repression from the influence of the conscious, it develops more rampantly and exuberantly. It proliferates in

²⁵⁵Freud, Sigmund. Vol. XIV p. 147

the dark, so to speak, and finds extreme forms of expression, which, when translated and presented to the neurotic, not only are bound to appear alien to him, but also frighten him by making the drive seem so extraordinary and dangerous in its intensity. This deceptive intensity is a result of the drive's uninhibited development in fantasy and the build-up caused by lack of satisfaction.²⁵⁶

Thus the method of expression of the drive in the conscious mind can differ from the actual drive itself, it alters its appearance both as a method of acceptance into the conscious mind and as a result of the frustration at its lack of acceptance into the conscious mind. Freud then goes on to distinguish between the drive itself (what he calls the “psychic (ideational) representative of the drive”) and the “emotive charge” of the drive, that aspect of the drive which expresses itself through emotions, especially anxiety. He states that as the purpose of repression is to avoid unpleasure it fails as a mechanism when feelings of anxiety or unpleasure occur. However it is the ideational elements method of expression through symptoms and substitute formations that indicate a return of the repressed.

The actions of the main protagonists in *Un Chien Andalou*, *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* are motivated for the most part by their unconscious rather than their conscious desires. In each film these unconscious elements have been repressed and are therefore inaccessible in relation to the self-knowledge of the individual character. In *Marnie* the trauma of murder has been repressed. The film opens with the protagonist consciously unaware that she has undergone this trauma. The narrative is structured around the struggle between the desire of Marnie's unconscious to express knowledge of this trauma and the resistance of her conscious mind to allow access to this ‘unpleasant’ knowledge. In order to gain access to her consciousness the repressed element has disguised itself into a phobic terror of the colour red, particularly when presented in liquid form. It is through this disguise that Marnie's repression enters her conscious mind and appears as the return of the repressed when she reacts violently to presentations of red objects. The protagonist of *Three Colours: Blue* has also experienced the trauma of death. Unlike Marnie it is not the knowledge of the death that is repressed but rather the grief at the loss of family that

²⁵⁶ Ibid. pp.37-8

is repressed. This repression of a trauma for Julie exists alongside the repression of her creative ability as a music composer. This film differs from *Marnie* in the way the knowledge of repression is presented to the audience. Here the audience are made aware of the death of Julie's family at the start and are given indications of her musical ability. However, despite these differences both films follow a similar narrative structure in which the main actions of the protagonist are motivated by their unconscious. *Un Chien Andalou* presents a different type of repression to trauma. Here, the protagonists are repressing their sexual desires. The narrative structure of this film also differs from *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* though not necessarily due to it featuring a different type of repression. In Buñuel's film the motivation of actions due to unconscious desires is given precedence or, at least equality with, the motivations of the conscious mind of the protagonists. This allows for a structure whereby events follow on progressively as a result of the unconscious desires of the protagonists. In *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* repression is explored through the effect it has on the conscious mind. These films are presented as following the actions of the consciousness of the protagonists although this presentation is constantly undercut by the moments of the return of the repressed indicating that it is the unconscious of the protagonists that is the determining factor for narrative progression.

Form as a reflection of content

The narrative progression in *Un Chien Andalou* follows the events of the character's unconscious rather than conscious mind. This unusual approach is made familiar by the use of continuity editing and by relying on audience familiarity with love stories. In a collection of published articles which along with *My Last Breath* constitutes Buñuel's only autobiographical writings, the Spanish director describes his first film; *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) as follows:

Although I availed myself of oneiric elements the film is not the description of a dream. On the contrary, the environment and characters are of a realistic type. Its fundamental difference from other films consists in the fact that all the characters function animated by impulses, the primal sources of which are confused with those of irrationalism, which, in turn, are those

of poetry. At times these characters react enigmatically, insofar as a pathologic psychic complex can be enigmatic.

The film is directed at the unconscious feelings of man, and therefore is of universal value, although it may seem disagreeable to certain groups of society which are sustained by puritanical moral principles.²⁵⁷

While this statement manages to articulate many of the aspects of the Surrealist movement that Buñuel found attractive: its anti-rational, anti-hierarchical, anti-bourgeois stance, it also clearly articulates the various forces that he felt were at play in this film and the way he set about representing both conscious and unconscious impulses on screen. For this statement at once rejects any claims that are made with regard to the film being representative of a dream (although the inspiration for the script came from various dreams of both Buñuel and Dalí)²⁵⁸, proposes the significant assertion that his characters have a basis in reality and ends by suggesting that due to the universal experience of unconscious feelings that it will be a film which will not only be understood, but will resonate with all viewers. It is the later two aspects of this film, those which deal with a presentation of unconscious impulses in a manner which requires no explanation and which is based on the experiences of realistic characters that are most pertinent to the way in which the representation of the unconscious of a character has a significant influence on the narrative structure of a film. It is difficult to present the unconscious of a character on screen without some kind of explanation. Hitchcock and Kieślowski provide a superstructure of the narrative of the conscious lives of their characters which frames the narrative of their unconscious activities. The dream films of early cinema and the serial killer genre distinguish clearly between the conscious and unconscious elements of the lives of their characters. Rather than explain the unconscious impulses of his characters by reference to their conscious lives, Buñuel relies on continuity editing to indicate a sense of progression from one event to another, thus relying on film form to represent the unconscious of his characters rather than on film content to explain it. The sequential progression from shot to shot that is implied by continuity editing is one way in which Buñuel structures the narrative events in this film. The second is

²⁵⁷ Buñuel, Luis. 2000. pp.250-1

²⁵⁸ Buñuel, Luis. 2003. p.104

through the use of characters which he designates as being “of a realistic type”.²⁵⁹ It is not so much that the main protagonists in *Un Chien Andalou* are realistic, but that they are a generic type that is of significance. Their romantic and sexual attraction to each other which is indicated throughout the film marks them as being lovers or potential lovers. This designation places the film within the genre of a romance or a love story and it relies on audience familiarity with this genre to provide a scaffold for the narrative of the unconscious which follows.

The element which makes this film unique is its reliance on the unconscious to underpin the motivations of its characters. Unlike other films which represent the unconscious of their characters intermittently, Buñuel and Dalí’s first film take this aspect of the psyche as their starting point, both in the writing of the script and in the production and post-production of the film. *Un Chien Andalou* is a film of and about the unconscious; any narrative progression that can be read from it is a narrative progression which echoes the operations of the unconscious itself, that is, a progression which is elusive, elliptical, regressive and repetitive by turns. In order for the content of such a film to be understood as such Buñuel and Dalí employed continuity editing which allows for a film to be read in a “this event occurred and as a consequence the following event then took place” pattern. What is revolutionary about *Un Chien Andalou* is that this pattern follows the narrative progression of the unconscious rather than the conscious aspect of the characters’ psyches. The goals, occupations, social status, past lives and future hopes of the characters in this film are not relevant to the progression of the narrative. In fact we learn nothing about the type of character they represent. They are presented to us as pure presence and have a physical existence only in the present time of the film. There are no indications as to the events which brought them to this moment in time, neither is there any sense that they are moving through time in the sense of a progression of hours, days or weeks. We know nothing of their family connections, or their relationship to others. Therefore we cannot ascribe any of their actions to psychological causes. These are characters without psychology; characters without character traits. In order then to

²⁵⁹ Buñuel, Luis. 2000. pp.250-1

understand the meaning of this film we must fall back on our prior knowledge of narrative, both a general knowledge and knowledge of how narrative is presented in film. As a presentation of the pure unconscious impulses of its characters this film would seem to be difficult to follow, for the operations and manifestations of the workings of the unconscious are not easily accessed by the conscious mind. However, whilst the progression of the narrative of *Un Chien Andalou* is entirely dependent on the unconscious motivation and impulses of its characters, the presentation of that narrative relies on methods which encourage a cause and effect reading of the film. In the films of Hitchcock and Kieślowski and in the dream films of early cinema and the films of the serial killer genre a type of compromise is reached between an attempt at a portrayal of the unconscious of a character and the creation of a fiction film whose narrative trajectory will be followed without difficulty by the audience. In these films the compromise favours clarity of expression, whilst these filmmakers use the unconscious desires of their characters as a source of narrative progression; this is not the only source of narrative progression in these films. Other events and characters as well as the defined personality traits of the protagonists conspire to advance the narrative. In *Un Chien Andalou* there is no such recourse to this strong type of narrative structure. The only source of character motivation in this film is the unconscious desires of the protagonists.

The system of continuity editing which dominated narrative filmmaking at that time (and since) was inextricably linked to the exposition and development of the psychological personality traits assigned to a character. One particular technique of continuity editing which linked narrative progression to the personality traits and psychology of a character was the eyeline match, a technique that Buñuel and Dalí utilised to great effect in *Un Chien Andalou*, although their use of this technique subverted its usual function. In its most basic format this technique works as follows: the first shot shows a character looking off-screen, the next shot shows what they are looking at. This technique often concludes with a reaction shot of the character which reveals their response to what they have seen. This editing technique encourages audience understanding of the motivation and desires of the character. The movement from character to what is looked at and back to character works with

other information we have received about the character to allow us to understand the effect on him/her. In *Un Chien Andalou* Buñuel and Dalí employ this technique throughout the film, however, instead of using it to further audience knowledge of the psychological traits of the character, they disrupt the typical pattern of this technique by placing the unexpected event before the gaze of the character. For example in an exchange of shots between the woman and the man the physical characteristics of each change when they look at each other. First the woman looks at the man and he places his hand over his mouth then, when he removes his hand his mouth has sealed up and is then replaced with hair. On his return gaze towards the woman she lifts her arm and discovers that her underarm hair is missing. In this film what the characters see when they look off-screen has no logical or rational relationship to anything which has occurred before this shot. Its significance cannot be understood with regards to any prior knowledge the audience has of the character as no such prior knowledge is offered by this film. Neither can a relationship between what is seen and the character who is seeing be guessed at with any degree of competence as we do not know enough about the character's motivations or desires to form a working hypothesis. The only way that a connection can be made between the character and what he or she looks at is if we undertake to presume a psychoanalytical rather than a psychological basis for character motivation and action. That is if we examine what the character looks at as evidence of unconscious desires and wishes. However, this is not a straightforward swapping of the origins of character motivation as unconscious desires and wishes cannot be traced back to their point of origin with the same degree of confidence and accuracy as conscious desires and wishes. In this way what a character looks at in *Un Chien Andalou* does not directly follow on from what has preceded this shot, but, in using the eyeline match which the audience is familiar with, Buñuel and Dalí give the implication that these two events do follow on from each other and in this way they give narrative dominance to the unconscious. Their film puts forward the suggestion that events and actions, cause and effect are linked in an irrational, non-logical manner, that there is a wealth of connections lying underneath the surface of every act and every object and every image. This method is related to Lacan's work on the way in which each signifier of the unconscious has

multiple meanings. Lacan's basis for examining the relationship between the unconscious and reason rests in his theory of the importance of the signifier. In his paper "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason since Freud", 1957, Lacan questions the relationship between signifier and signified, emphasising the independence of the signifier and stating that meaning does not arise in a single signifier but rather in the way that each signifier is related to another signifier in a chain of meaning. Each signifier also has multiple contexts:

Indeed, there is no signifying chain that does not sustain – as if attached to the punctuation of each of its units – all attested contexts that are, so to speak, “vertically” linked to that point.²⁶⁰

This method of operation incorporates Lacan's previously outlined system of the process of the signifier having two sides; metaphor and metonymy. Lacan connects these terms to Freud's classification of dreams as consisting of 'condensation' and 'displacement':

Verdichtung, “condensation,” is the superimposed structure of signifiers in which metaphor finds its field....

Verschiebung or “displacement” – this transfer of signification that metonymy displays is closer to the German term; it is presented, right from its first appearance in Freud's work as the unconscious' best means by which to foil censorship.²⁶¹

Dreams and the unconscious itself, have many methods of representing their meaning available to them. Lacan argues that all of these methods are basically linguistic in that their structure is made up of symbols. Thus 'condensation' of representation is equal to the use of metaphor in language, and 'displacement' of representation is equal to the use of metonymy in language. The most significant aspect of *Un Chien Andalou* from the point of view of the relationship between representations of the unconscious of a character and film narrative is the fact that through the use of continuity editing a link is made between unconscious desires and subsequent actions. In this way the main driving force behind narrative progression in *Un Chien Andalou*

²⁶⁰ Lacan, Jacques. "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud." *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans: Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006. p. 419
²⁶¹Ibid. p. 425

is the unconscious. What differentiates this film from others which also feature the unconscious of a protagonist as a main narrative force is that Buñuel and Dalí do not support their narrative of the unconscious with a narrative of the conscious life of their characters²⁶². Rather in order to help the audience understand and gain pleasure from their film they support their narrative of the unconscious with the structure of continuity editing which the audience is familiar with from watching other narrative films.

In her psychoanalytic-semiotic study of Surrealist film Linda Williams also emphasises the importance of film form for the Surrealists. She argues that Surrealist films seek to imitate the form not the content of unconscious desires. She states:

For, whether in the subject of unconscious erotic desire or in the human subject considered as a psychological entity, surrealist film is a radical questioning of the supposed integrity of these subjects and of the enigmatic relations between content and form...desire functions much less as a subject-content than it does as a form – a structured process in which the work of the image is of central importance.²⁶³

Williams argues that Surrealists use the model of the dream in their films as they are influenced by the way that dreams are systems of communication that differ from verbal language²⁶⁴, stating that as the language of images is more direct than that of words, that images do not represent rather they take the form of the unconscious. If a film is to be Surrealist it must copy the way in which a dream signifies.²⁶⁵ She states that Surrealist filmmakers want to focus audience belief in the signifier, in the image, rather than in the fictional signified. This method imitates the structure of a dream as it is experienced by the dreamer, not as it is told on awakening.²⁶⁶ It is this aspect of Williams's analysis that is most significant to an understanding of how the unconscious operates as a source of narrative progression in *Un Chien Andalou*. Williams's focus on the signifier, the image, places an emphasis on the realistic

²⁶² For example, *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* have the unconscious of the protagonist as the main narrative force but both these films are supported by a sub-structure of the conscious life of the protagonist.

²⁶³ Williams, Linda. p.15

²⁶⁴ Ibid. p.17

²⁶⁵ Ibid. p.22

²⁶⁶ Ibid. p.51

presentation of that image as image. She makes the point that Surrealist film rarely relies on superimpositions or other types of visual distortion in their presentation of the unconscious. Rather each image is not only crystal clear, but each image also follows patterns of perspective that reproduce those which occur in reality. She states that:

...the Surrealist goal with respect to the cinematic signifier is to approximate as closely as possible the dreamer's belief in the reality of the signifier, a signifier that the dreamer *thinks* is perceived but is really only imagined. If the film is to inspire belief in the signifier, it must provide images that are easily perceived, that are clear and straightforward *as* images even (or especially) if their content is bizarre in the extreme... This is one source of Surrealist films paradoxical "realism"; the realism Surrealist filmmakers take away on the level of the fiction or signified they restore on the level of the image or signifier.²⁶⁷

Williams's analysis with regards to the realism of the image in Surrealist films is accurate, particularly in regard to *Un Chien Andalou*. However, her comment that the content of these images is bizarre and her reference to the non-realist aspect of these films on the level of the fiction is a reading of such films which takes conscious life and motivation as the norm and unconscious life as something extraordinary. While this is true in general and with regards to fiction film in particular, it is problematic with regards to a reading of *Un Chien Andalou* as this film along with other Surrealist films accepted and promoted unconscious aspects of daily life as being as real as, and considerably more significant than, conscious aspects of life. For the images in these films are bizarre and the fiction unrealistic only if viewed from the point of view of consciousness. From the point of view of the Surrealists who valued the workings of the unconscious part of the psyche above all else when it came to issues of realism, truth and creativity there is no such thing as a bizarre image. That which is understood to be bizarre arises from an incorrect approach – that of conscious, rational thought rather than an unconscious approach. Similarly what appears to be non-realistic at the level of fiction in *Un Chien Andalou* does so only if approached from a conscious, rational point of view. When looked at from a perspective which equates realism only with those active, conscious, rational thoughts and actions which

²⁶⁷Ibid. p.48

take up the greater part of daily life, the sequence of events in *Un Chien Andalou* in which a man's mouth closes over, is then covered by hair which leads the woman to notice that her underarm hair is missing seem to be non-realistic. There appears to be nothing in this sequence as a whole or in its various parts that could be marked as realistic. However, this apparent lack of realism is easily overcome if the sequence is watched from the perspective of unconscious narrative progression which contains a sense of reality which is all-inclusive and which permits such a succession of movements as has been described above. On the level of fiction the progression of images in *Un Chien Andalou* are neither bizarre nor are their connections unrealistic if we understand that these images and sequences originate in the unconscious. The basic premise of Buñuel and Dalí's film, and perhaps their most revolutionary idea, is that unconscious thought and unconscious motivation is as realistic as conscious thought and motivation.

Robert Short and Ramona Fotiade²⁶⁸ also make reference to the significance of film form for the Surrealists. Short claims that the use of continuity editing gives rise to audience expectations that there will be a linear narrative to follow, but that this type of editing is only used by the filmmakers to subvert that expectation. Short also claims that it is possible to posit goals for the characters in the film thus imposing a linear narrative with regards to content as well as form. He states that the two creators of *Un Chien Andalou* employed this type of editing to draw the spectator into the film in order to subvert the expectations that were set up with regards to narrative progression through the use of continuity editing. Short describes the film as "...a filmic exploration of how the mind dreams and of the processes by which 'dream creates its meanings'".²⁶⁹ He goes on to clarify this statement by saying that the film is about the form of the processes of the unconscious and that it transgresses traditional discourses in order to represent the unconscious.²⁷⁰ He concludes his analysis of the film as follows: "Instead of narrative, the unfolding of *Un Chien*

268 Fotiade, Ramona. "From Ready-Made to Moving Image: The Visual Poetics of Surrealist Cinema." *The Unsilvered Screen: Surrealism on Film*. Ed. Graeme Harper and Rob Stone. London: Wallflower Press, 2007.

²⁶⁹ Short, Robert. *The Age of Gold: Dalí, Buñuel, Artaud: Surrealist Cinema*. London: Solar Books, 2008. p.

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²⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 94

Andalou presents us with a succession of repeated displacements of the same structures of desire – the eternal return of Freud’s ‘repressed’.”²⁷¹ He then ends his argument by declaring that the patterns of representation at work in the film do not completely prevent a narrative from emerging as it can be discerned that each of the characters within the film have goals.²⁷² However the idea of a goal orientated character is one that is connected to American cinema and the Classical Hollywood narrative in particular. Moreover this cinema developed the psychologically motivated character as its mainstay of narrative progression. Both John Belton and Marilyn Fabe have identified the goal driven character as being a distinguishing factor of the Classical Hollywood narrative. Belton argues that in this cinema:

...characters are more or less stable, knowable, and psychologically coherent individuals who possess clearly defined, specific goals. Although this cinema is also a plot-driven or action cinema, characters stand at the centre of the action and interact with events...Plot expectations are set by the specific goals that individual characters possess or by the problems they are asked to solve....The narrative ends with the character’s triumph or failure, with the resolution (or conclusive nonresolution) of the problem, and with the attainment (or clear-cut nonattainment) of the goal.²⁷³

While Fabe, following David Bordwell’s work states that the Classical Hollywood Narrative centres on personal psychological causes where the initial cause is a desire which leads to the setting up of a goal. This gives us the active, goal-orientated protagonist and the narrative follows how the goal is accomplished. Whilst the body of Short’s analysis of *Un Chien Andalou* contends that the form of the film, as presented through the use of continuity editing which indicates a traditional linear narrative, is subverted by the content of the film which seeks to represent the unconscious, his concluding statement seems to negate this argument by linking the actions of the characters to the achievement of a goal. In this way he reads the film as if on some level the form and the content unite to produce an overall narrative structure which is less dependent of the unconscious desires of the protagonists for its progression than has hitherto seemed to be the case.

²⁷¹ Ibid. p.97

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Belton, John. *American Cinema/American Culture*. 2nd ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005. p.25

Ramona Fotiade distinguishes between the characterisation in Surrealist and non-Surrealist film as follows:

In contrast to the conception of ‘psychological film’ and ‘subjective cinema’ developed for example, by Germaine Dulac, the use of shots linked through dissolves in Buñuel and Dalí’s *Un Chien Andalou* implicitly undermine the psychological characterisation of the realist film, and the related literary conventions of the psychological novel...Dissolves here play on the viewer’s frustrated expectation, on the absence of any elucidation or conventional psychological reference to the previous and/or following shots...Surrealism promoted the idea of a cinema inspired by daily life situations, which would radically contradict common perceptions, moral conventions and religious beliefs. The new language of film had to illuminate equally disquieting, unfamiliar topics in order to achieve a truly ‘revolutionary’ impact, thus heightening the impression of ‘reality’ and at the same time, disclosing images that the eye has not yet seen.²⁷⁴

Fotiade’s comments highlight the fact that there is a disconnection between form and content in this film. The form of the film leads, as Fotiade indicates, the spectator to expect that certain actions will result from certain events. For example, when the female character opens the door to leave the room towards the end of the film, it is expected that the next shot will show her in another room or standing in the hallway. Instead, she exits the room and the next shot shows her standing on a beach. However, rather than the dissolves (and other techniques) working to frustrate audiences expectations I would suggest that the use of the techniques of continuity editing lead the audience to read the film as if the action of the woman leaving the apartment naturally led to her arrival on a beach. That instead of a disconnection between form and content as Fotiade suggests which leads to frustrated expectations on the part of the audience, there is such a familiarity with the form that it works to impose an order on the content which allows for a pleasurable understanding of the film.

Buñuel’s claim²⁷⁵ that the characters in *Un Chien Andalou* have a basis in reality and that the film depicts unconscious feelings which will be understood by all can only be validated and accepted if the film is viewed from the perspective of

²⁷⁴ Fotiade, Ramona. pp. 17-8

²⁷⁵ Buñuel, Luis. 2000. pp.250-1

unconscious motivation and thought. That is to say that the most unique aspect of this film is that it relies on psychoanalysis rather than psychology for character motivation. The two main protagonists in this film act and react according to their unconscious desires only. Apart from the shots of them separately before they meet, none of their actions can be said to derive from conscious, psychological motivation. As a result, narrative progression in this film is entirely dependent on an imitation of the way in which the unconscious works. It is elusive, elliptical, regressive and repetitive. This reliance on a psychoanalytical rather than a psychological motivation is also unique as unlike other films which use the unconscious of a character as the mainstay of narrative progression, *Un Chien Andalou*'s narrative is not supported by a narrative of the conscious life of the characters. Rather this film's narrative structure depends upon audience familiarity with narrative especially love stories and the use of continuity editing to indicate narrative progression. The use of continuity editing allows the audience to make the link between one event and the next in a progressive, cause and effect sequence. The technical form of the film is so familiar to the audience that it works to impose a type of order on the content of the film. Both methods of narrative structure are set up at the start of the film. The prologue shows that continuity editing will be used, but towards different effects that is usual in a fiction film. The first sequence after the prologue allows the audience to imagine the beginnings of a love story. Two separate characters are introduced and shortly they meet. This section is without unconscious motivation and it sets up the expectations for what is to follow.

In this film, Buñuel opens the scene with his famous "warning" to viewers, that impossible to forget or to be shocked by scene, where an eye is cut through by a blade. From this shocking opening scene then we are thrown into the "story" of this film. This tells the audience that linearity or connections between events will be indicated by continuity editing. It is associative editing and represents the associative method of operation of the unconscious. So, we are 'warned' that this film will not contain rational linear progression, rather associative illogical progression. If we view this first scene as a prelude, the film then truly begins with the image of a man cycling down the street. Despite Buñuel's warning at the start not to give trust to our

usual perceptual abilities, we watch this young man on his bicycle, presuming him to be one of the main protagonists and expecting that the film will follow at least to some degree his story, the events that happen to him. Of course the film does follow these events, but, rather than following the pattern of a typical narrative film, Buñuel's first film follows the events of his and the other character's unconscious rather than conscious minds.

The distinction between following the progression of events as they come from the unconscious or conscious mind affects the way we follow a film and in particular our expectations of how the narrative will progress. In the case of *Un Chien Andalou*, the fact that this film follows the progress of the unconscious is clearly outlined both from the start of the film and from Buñuel's intentions when making the film. However, despite this knowledge of the film that the audience has when sitting down to view it, the traditional way of following a story in film, which is to follow the progression of events through the conscious actions of the protagonists is so much of a habit with film viewers, that a film which depicts events from the point of view of the unconscious, as is the case with *Un Chien Andalou*, will appear at first viewing to have no narrative coherency at all. Buñuel, with this film disturbed the audience, disturbed the way in which they viewed film, that is his great shock, more so even than the infamous opening scene. In this film he is asking the viewer to completely change the way in which they watch a film, to change their expectations of "what will happen next", to change the way in which they normally view the story to be progressing. Hitchcock and Kieślowski incorporate the narrative of the unconscious into the narrative of consciousness, their films run both agents of narrative progression side by side, disrupting and complementing each other, but always both together so that the audience has some degree of familiarity, some sense of the fact that these films, while deviating from the norm are still in touch with the traditional way of telling a story in film. Buñuel eschews any such way of making his audience comfortable, any such way of bringing the audience along with him into new territory. Rather, he jolts them into an expectation of the new at the start of his film and is unrelenting throughout the rest of the film with regards to following any traditional narrative pattern.

There are just two sequences in this film which stand outside the pattern of unconscious narrative motivation and both are extremely important with regards to setting up the structure of the film which follows. The first of these sequences is the prologue and the second is the first minutes of the film up until the moment when the man and the woman first appear in the apartment together. Both sequences indicate quite clearly that continuity editing will be used to progress the narrative forward, but the use to which this technique is put is quite different in each sequence. The prologue sets up the use to which continuity editing will be put throughout the rest of the film. Literally and metaphorically it tells the spectator that previous patterns of narrative progression will be used to achieve different ends to that normally experienced in the narrative fiction film. Paul Hammond describes this moment as follows:

In his prologue to *Un Chien Andalou* Buñuel spectacularly bisected the rational, Cartesian eye. Returned to its “savage stage”, the razored eyeball is obliged to look behind itself: so, following that famous violatory moment, the film describes the avaricious play of unconscious thought hurtling osmotically from within to without and back again.²⁷⁶

After this opening warning to the spectator an intertitle reads: “Eight Years Later” and we watch as a man cycles down a street. Initially this sequence follows the cyclist before introducing the character of the woman placed in her apartment reading a book. This section then alternates between shots of the man and shots of the woman leading the audience to expect that there is some connection between these two characters. This expectation is reinforced when the woman reacts to the moment when the cyclist falls off his bike, although refusing even here to follow a chronological order we first see the woman’s reaction and then we see the accident. This sequence ends with the woman embracing the man as he lies beside his fallen bike. Apart from the prologue this is the only sequence in the film where the audience can follow a logical, rational narrative progression. As the woman waits in her apartment, a man cycles down the street (to her?), he falls from his bike and she embraces him. Its reliance on both continuity editing and its avoidance of a

²⁷⁶ Hammond, Paul. *The Shadow and It's Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*. 3rd Ed. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2000. p. 26

representation of the unconscious of these characters prepares the spectator to be able to read what comes next. The prologue indicates that continuity editing will be used to produce unexpected results. This subsequent sequence gives the audience a framework for understanding these results. In setting up a reasonably benign sequence of a man and a woman featuring a mixture of anxiety, indifference and an embrace Buñuel and Dalí encourage their audience to believe that they are watching a love story. Audience familiarity with love stories will therefore allow them to process the subsequent images under this categorisation.

Parallel Narratives

The narrative of consciousness, of the ego, is the narrative of the majority if not of all film. Film excels at representing the ego; it is a medium which depends on the portrayal of the conscious actions of the protagonist for its appeal. The narrative of a film is unfolded through these actions. All narratives rely on a human agent as the most significant source of the story; we follow all narratives through the actions of a human being. The protagonist then is the most significant of all the possible sources of narrative agency. If the protagonist is the main source of narrative agency and the story turns on following one character, a difficulty arises with the medium of film with regards to how well or fully that character can be represented in film. Film depicts, it shows. It is the dominance of the visual (and to a certain extent the aural) in film which gives rise to the difficulties that film has in representing any aspect of human nature which does not reveal itself through actions. Those aspects of narrative agency that occur by virtue of our wishes, desires, dreams, or those actions that we take that are inspired by instinct, that go against the grain of rational thought, these are more difficult to portray on screen than those actions that are a result of consciousness. These parts of human nature form that part of the psyche that is the unconscious, and this aspect of our existence is as great a force of narrative agency as is our conscious thoughts and actions.

Seymour Chatman looks at the mode in which films tell a story. In his article “What Novels Can Do That Films can’t (and Vice-Versa)” he examines the use and effect of narrative voice in film. He begins by comparing the different methods of presenting a narrative that are available to both films and novels, arguing that novels

can both depict and assert their meaning whereas films can only depict, they do not have resource to the assertive voice. Chatman gives two reasons why film does not have access to the assertive voice. The first is the speed of events presented in a film; the second is the quantity of details that are present in a single image. He argues that these two properties of film work together to prevent a film from using the assertive voice. Chatman argues that the spectator is unable to take into account all the details in a particular scene in part due to the speed of the film but also due to the fact that the spectator is curious as to what will happen next: "...narrative films do not usually allow us time to dwell on plenteous details. Pressure from the narrative component is too great. Events move too fast." (p.448-9) Film according to Chatman depicts while literature both depicts and asserts. The writer of a text has an authority that directs the reader to a particular point of view or understanding of the text, using the assertive voice to make their intentions explicit. In film the use of the assertive voice is limited to voice-over which Chatman indicates is un-cinematic. Any other attempts which are made to direct the spectator towards a particular understanding are also felt to work against the dominant mode of narrative film which is presentational. Efforts to direct the viewers understanding in a particular direction which appears onscreen in an obvious manner is likely to reduce the viewing pleasure to be obtained from the narrative. The reason for this lies in part with the use of continuity or invisible editing by the majority of narrative filmmakers. Continuity editing helps create the illusion that the events taking place on screen are simply a flow of events which are naturally occurring. This type of editing reinforces the effect of the two properties (speed and the quantity of details) which Chatman describes as being the most significant barriers to the use of the assertive voice in film.

Without recourse to the assertive or authoritative voice filmmakers must find other ways to make the meaning of their narrative clear to the spectator. The act of presentation or depiction must be unambiguous lest the meaning be lost through lack of clarity. To this end most fiction films contain some mixture of a cause and effect narrative presented through the use of continuity editing. The lack of an assertive voice is compensated by the use of clarity in presentation. The opening segment of Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954) is a good example of such clarity of presentation.

At the end of this sequence the spectator has discerned that Jefferies (James Stewart) is immobilised in his apartment during a heat wave, that he is surrounded by other apartments in his courtyard, that he is a sports or other action-based photographer, and that it is likely that he broke his leg during the course of his work. All of this information is gathered by the viewer by the way it is presented. The camera pans around the courtyard and then into Jefferies apartment where it pans from a sleeping Jefferies to a thermometer, broken camera equipment, a negative and positive image of a pretty girl and a photograph of an out of control racing car approaching the camera. Throughout this sequence there is no dialogue. The spectator gains an understanding of the character of Jefferies by watching the images that have been selected by Hitchcock unfold on screen.

Without the use of the assertive voice, films run the risk of having their meanings misunderstood, it is this factor that induces filmmakers to clearly mark out and show what is important to their story from the beginning of a film as happens in the opening sequence of *Rear Window*. The language of cinema has developed to such a point at this stage that the typical film viewer does not even notice the techniques that a filmmaker uses to point out characters and places that are to be significant to her story. As film viewers we have learnt what is meant when there is an establishing shot followed by a close-up, it tells us that this person or place is significant, that we should watch them on screen and the story will develop around this watching. The language of cinema has thus developed to such an extent that these techniques of showing a story, of depicting a story, no longer seem like techniques to the average viewer, rather, they are part and parcel of the telling of a story through the medium of film. In fact it is only when they are used by an inexperienced or clumsy filmmaker that the fact that they are techniques becomes apparent again. As Chatman states when describing the use of voiceover in film, film is a medium which implicates visually, that which is made explicit in film is usually considered to fit uncomfortably with the medium.

Film then has developed many techniques in order to tell a story by depiction, by showing, by presenting, by revealing through visual means. If film excels at depiction, how does this medium then depict that which is not visible, if the means of

assertion which are used by literature are not available to it? Assertion is one of the methods that literature has at its disposal which allows it to reveal the inner workings of the mind, the author can state that such and such is the case in these circumstances. Film's excellence at depiction, as Chatman has it, the way it "renders in pictorial form", leaves it in a difficult position when it comes to showing that which does not lend itself to pictorial form.

What happens to the narrative of a film then when a filmmaker wants the unconscious to have a significant narrative role to play? How can the operations of the unconscious be introduced into the narrative of a film? It is the contention of this chapter that when the unconscious is used as a force of narrative agency in film that the dominant narrative of the ego will at first appear to be subverted by the introduction of the unconscious but that throughout the course of the film it will become apparent that the actual dominant force of narrative agency was the unconscious. This section will examine *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* in order to discuss the way in which the unconscious is represented and the effect that this representation has on the narrative of these films. It will contend that the methods used to show the unconscious in these films seem at first to be ways of subverting the narrative, as the appearance of the unconscious stops the film and this disruption of the narrative causes the viewer to initially distrust the narrative. However, as each film progresses the impact of the representations of the unconscious alerts the audience to their significance to the narrative and by the second act of each film the audience has gained sufficient knowledge of the conscious lives of the protagonists to make a connection between the difficulties suffered by the protagonists and the apparently disruptive moments which arise with each appearance of the unconscious. This connection between the conscious and unconscious narrative strands, while it allows the audience to understand that the appearance of the unconscious rather than disrupting the narrative does in fact have narrative meaning, is not enough for the audience to distinguish the precise narrative role of the unconscious, for the use of the unconscious as the main source of narrative agency is only revealed at the end of these films.

The presentation of the narrative in both *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* is similar in ways to the narrative presentation of a mystery or detective film. In these two films the unconscious is the main driving force of the narrative but the narrative agency of the unconscious is only fully understood retrospectively. In both films events happen that can be read as clues to recognising the unconscious workings of the protagonist's minds. Initially, these clues to the narrative importance of the unconscious, seem to subvert the narrative development of each film, as each appearance of the unconscious occurs without warning, and, in the process of watching the film, seems to have no impact on subsequent events. However, both Hitchcock and Kieślowski repeat the appearance of the unconscious throughout these films and this repetition brings a certain familiarity to the audience. This familiarity combined with the powerful visual (and in the case of *Three Colours: Blue*) aural impact of the appearance of the unconscious allows the audience to register the possibility that these events have narrative significance, even if that significance is not apparent immediately.

The narrative power of the unconscious in these films comes from the fact that both directors are attempting to show the operations of repression. They do this from the point of view of consciousness, that is, they show the impact of the mechanisms of repression as it appears to the conscious mind. The narrative of repression is as follows: a traumatic event occurs, it is repressed, and the repressed returns in a disruptive manner, the original event must be revisited in order to come to terms with the trauma. This narrative however, is the narrative of repression from the point of view of the unconscious. From the point of view of consciousness, awareness of repression only comes about through the disturbances of the "return of the repressed". In *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* the narrative is presented through the conscious actions of the protagonists. In the case of Julie in *Three Colours: Blue*, we follow her conscious attempts to get on with her life after the accident in which she lost her husband and child. In *Marnie* while we do not know Marnie's original trauma at the start of this film, however, it is apparent that Marnie is a troubled woman and we follow the narrative of her attempts to overcome her difficulties. Throughout both these films this presented narrative of consciousness is constantly interrupted by the

narrative of the operation of the unconscious. These appearances of the unconscious appear at first to be a disruption to the narrative, but are in fact a vital part of the narrative development. Without the 'return of the repressed' that is signified by the red suffusions in *Marnie* and the music in *Three Colours: Blue*, the stories of Julie and Marnie would not progress as a resolution to the original repression of the trauma can only occur when that trauma is revisited.

Marnie and *Three Colours: Blue* are structured along two parallel narrative lines. There are two separate but intertwining narratives in each film which separate and come together at various moments, each of them required for the overall understanding of the story. The narrative structure of these films is therefore unusual in that here the story is driven as much by the unconscious operations of the protagonists as by their conscious actions. In these films the progression of the narrative is dependent equally on the events in the unconscious aspect of the protagonist's personalities as it is on their conscious actions. It is important to distinguish here between what Hitchcock and Kieślowski are attempting to achieve and the works of other filmmakers. Whereas there are other filmmakers who show more than the conscious actions of the protagonists on screen, (dreams, day-dreaming, thinking, wishing etc), in general, these filmmakers differ from Hitchcock and Kieślowski in two different ways²⁷⁷. Firstly, Hitchcock and Kieślowski go beyond subjectivity into the primal state of desire. Secondly, and more importantly, the difference is one of usage: other filmmakers tend to use these subjective moments in order to create a fuller picture of their protagonist's personality, for example the use of a dream sequence to explain why the main character is haunted by an event, or a flash-back sequence to explain the reasons for the protagonist's current state of affairs. In these cases the subjectivity of the protagonist is used to give the audience an insight into the protagonist's behaviour and/or personality, these moments are used in order to expand or support the traditional "conscious actions" based narrative. These moments of insight do not stand alone as an independent part of the narrative structure of the film. Rather they form a part of the traditional narrative progression

²⁷⁷ See for example the work of Michel Gondry. He portrays the dream world of the protagonist in *The Science of Sleep* (2006) and issues of memory retention and loss in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004)

of the film. Hitchcock and Kieślowski rather than use subjectivity (or in this case the unconscious) as a bit player to the conscious actions of their protagonists they give the unconscious equal weight as a narrative device in these films. Here the unconscious does not explain or support the conscious actions of the main characters, rather it is a narrative device in its own right, as significant and important to the development and resolution of the story as the conscious actions themselves. This movement from bit-player to equal billing has repercussions for the overall structure of the narrative, as these narratives are no longer solely relying on the conscious actions of the protagonist for their progression, rather they are dependent both on the conscious actions and the unconscious desires of the protagonists working now together and now against each other for the narrative development of these films. It is this giving of equal narrative weight to both the conscious and unconscious of the protagonists that mark Hitchcock and Kieślowski apart from other filmmakers.

If we take as two separate narrative threads the conscious and unconscious of the protagonists in both *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* we must acknowledge that these parts of the psyche work in different ways. Therefore in these films their individual structures will differ, in particular, the way in which these structures are presented to the spectator in the course of the overall narrative of these films will differ. The overall narrative structure of both these films concerns a woman who has suffered a traumatic event and these films show the repercussions of that event on both her conscious and unconscious mind. In both films this narrative structure moves towards a process of coming to terms with this trauma and each film ends with a tentative sense of acceptance and hope. The presentation of this overall narrative structure follows the established method of fiction film presentation in that the conscious actions of the protagonist are the base point for all other aspects of these films. In order for the unconscious actions of the protagonist to have equality in these narratives the viewer must have as a base point for following the story and this base is the conscious actions of the protagonist. Kieślowski made this point in an interview regarding *The Double Life of Veronique*: “If I show too much then there is no mystery, if I show too little then I risk loosing the spectator”²⁷⁸. The overall narrative

²⁷⁸ Stok, Danusia. p. 173

structure of these films is as follows: a trauma is experienced (revealed to the spectator in *Three Colours: Blue*, unknown to the spectator in *Marnie*), the protagonists ignore and hide from the repercussions of this trauma, an event occurs which forces them to confront the trauma and following this confrontation a tentative new start is made. The overall structure of the narrative follows this pattern in order for both films to be comprehensible to the spectator, without this overall structure these films would take the risk of the spectator losing the narrative thread altogether. However as both Kieślowski and Hitchcock are determined to give the unconscious an equality of narrative importance this overall structure functions as a framework which they sub-divide into conscious and unconscious structures. The introduction of the unconscious narrative structure alters how the conscious structure operates, each narrative structure affects the other and both intertwine and work together to ensure overall narrative comprehension. The conscious narrative structure details the actions that the protagonist undertakes to ignore the repercussions of the trauma, it also details the actions the protagonist undertakes in order to continue her life after the trauma. However, in these films the conscious narrative also details those moments when the repressed part of the trauma moves from the unconscious into the conscious mind.

Both Hitchcock and Kieślowski introduce the unconscious in *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* at the start of these films. They do so without any explanation and without preparing the audience for its appearance. In *Marnie* the unconscious is represented by the flooding of the screen with a red wash, in *Three Colours: Blue* by the introduction of a musical phrase. The first appearance of these events is the most shocking to the audience, precisely because there is no set up involved and no explanation following on from their appearances. Up until this point in both films the audience have been following a fairly conventional narrative structure. The main protagonists have been introduced, the story has been set up, and the initial events have taken place. At this point in both films the audience are building up expectations as to what will happen next. These expectations are formed on the basis of what has been revealed to the viewer so far, they can be fulfilled or denied or they can lapse and be taken over by new expectations. The viewer's engagement with the

narrative of film is based on an understanding of events as they are presented and the formulation of expectations for the future of the development of the narrative based on these events. In *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* the spectator must construct the overlying narrative from the sequences and clues depicted on screen. In the case of these two films the spectator must be particularly active in constructing the narrative, for while most events are predicated on the activities of the unconscious of the protagonists, nevertheless this is not made explicit during the course of these films and the moments in which the unconscious reveals itself to the conscious mind of the protagonists are moments which only reveal their significance cumulatively. Thus the spectator must be alert to these clues regarding the main motivation for character action while at the same time be able to undertake a bringing together of these clues in order to make sense of the narrative. The type of spectator described here as an active participant in the understanding of a film narrative is portrayed by David Bordwell as a spectator who relies on their perceptual and cognitive functions when watching a film²⁷⁹.

Bordwell makes a link between what the spectator sees on screen and the way they are able to link these images and events together into a narrative. He posits an active, questioning spectator who is in direct opposition to the “positioned” spectator of psychoanalytical film theory. Bordwell’s spectator comes to a film complete with all the talents needed to understand the unfolding narrative on screen. The most significant aspect of Bordwell’s theory for the purposes of discovering the impact of unconscious motivation on narrative structure is the activities a spectator undertakes when watching a film. He outlines four major cognitive processes that occur during film viewing: the use of assumptions, inferences, memory and hypothesis in order to understand a narrative.²⁸⁰ In *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* assumptions and inferences must be made early in the watching of the film with regards to those moments when the unconscious of the protagonist appears on screen. This visual depiction of the unconscious takes on a similar format in each film. In *Marnie* it is shown by a red wash that covers the screen. In *Three Colours: Blue* it is shown by a

²⁷⁹ Bordwell, David. *Narration in the Fiction Film*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985. p.37
²⁸⁰ Ibid.

musical score and a blue wash. The presentation of these images also follows a similar pattern: the washes appear on screen without any forewarning or any subsequent exploration. Their presentation therefore requires the spectator to initially make assumptions with regard to their narrative significance.

In his book *Narration in the Fiction Film* David Bordwell looks at the process of narrative, that is, how story events are organised in order to have a specific effect on the spectator. His focus here is on the way in which the spectator constructs a narrative from the given material. He posits a theory of an active, questioning spectator who makes sense of the narrative based on their previous knowledge. The spectator comes to a film with certain expectations based on the prior experience of narrative. They then use this experience in conjunction with the events as presented in the film to engage with the narrative through the means of testing and rejecting or accepting hypotheses. He states:

Our prior commerce with narrative and the everyday world allows us to expect that events will occur in some determinate order, and in most films specific clues encourage us to treat each distinct action as following previously presented ones. If the narrative presents events out of chronological order, we must fall back on our ability to rearrange them according to schemata. But such films run the risk of confusing us. Moreover, cinema's viewing conditions add a constraint: under normal conditions, it is not possible to review stretches of a film as one can reread passages of prose. The relentless forward march of stimuli in a film puts an extra strain on the spectator's memory and inferential processes.²⁸¹

He adds that our prior experience of story-telling allows us to perform certain operations while watching a film. We establish causal connections between events, we speculate when information is missing, we form hypotheses based on given information and we test these hypotheses; accepting, rejecting or postponing them based on subsequent events. All of these operations are orientated around making sense of a film, giving it meaning and coherence as a unit. Throughout the process of narration then the viewer is constantly working with the events portrayed on screen to understand the story of the film, to make sense of it. As Bordwell states above this process is subject to a time restraint, the operation of making sense of a film occurs

²⁸¹ Ibid. p.33

as that story is taking place before us, we must undertake the process of meaning making continuously without recourse to reflection; the process is instantaneous. What then happens when the events are presented in such a way that they do not conform to a person's previous knowledge of story-telling? In both *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* events occur which a person cannot make sense of as the film is progressing. Hypotheses are made about these events during the course of each film, but none of these hypotheses can be accepted based on our previous knowledge of story-telling or based on events in the films themselves. The events which are presented in these films for the viewer to make sense of are events of the unconscious, presented in such a way as to mimic the operations of the unconscious itself. The narrative of most fiction films does not depend on the actions of the unconscious for its sense of meaning, thus in this instance the viewer does not have any recourse to previous story-telling experience in order to form a coherent narrative from the events portrayed. However, in both these films the viewer does form a coherent narrative from the events portrayed, despite some of these events originating in the unconscious of the protagonists and being portrayed as such. What both Hitchcock and Kiesłowski achieve in these films is to subvert this way of understanding and following narrative. They accomplish this by the introduction of an event which cannot be explained either by reference to an understanding of events so far, nor in relation to it being the cause of expectations for the future development of the narrative. The initial appearance of the unconscious in both these films is a moment where the narrative appears to rupture and break apart. At this point in both films it seems as if the narrative has stopped. The emphasis here is on the fact that it *appears* that the first representation of the unconscious stops the narrative, later this chapter will argue that what initially appears to stop the narrative is in fact the introduction of the main narrative agent in both these films. However, part of the way in which the unconscious operates as a narrative agent is the way in which its initial appearance occurs.

This apparent stopping of the narrative disrupts the momentum of these films. These moments operate on two levels. The first level is the immediate reaction to these events, which gives rise to a sense of distrust in the narrative, up until now the

viewer has been following the narrative quite happily, believing themselves to be understanding it and working with the film to create meaning. At the moment of the first introduction of the unconscious this relationship between the film and the audience breaks down. The second level of operation comes from the visual and aural impact of these moments. Despite the fact that at these moments the viewer feels that the film has been stopped, the power of the visual and aural impact forces the viewer to take notice of what is happening on screen, to note that it is a significant moment, despite the fact that it has no meaning or significance in the current context of the narrative. Thus at the moment of the initial appearance of the unconscious on screen the viewer is put into two different states regarding the film. The viewer is both confused by this sudden stopping of the narrative and fascinated by the images and sounds by which it is presented. This initial stopping of the narrative mirrors the way in which the unconscious itself works. The unconscious is a part of the psyche to which we don't have the level of access that we have with our conscious selves. Our awareness of the unconscious only comes about when it forces its way to consciousness, demanding to be heard. This usually happens in a way that is a distortion of what the unconscious wants to say. This method of operation makes it difficult for the unconscious to be recognised by the conscious self. So it is with *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue*. Both Hitchcock and Kieślowski introduce the unconscious to their films in the same way that the unconscious itself reveals itself to consciousness. In these films the unconscious explodes on screen, confusing both the protagonist and the viewer, it can't be made sense of within the diegesis so far. It cannot be made sense of in a narrative fashion. The impact on the viewer of this first appearance of the unconscious mirrors that of the way in which the unconscious forces itself onto the attention of consciousness. It appears in both instances out of the blue, with no forewarning and no explanation. The viewer is left with the sensation that something strange and powerful has just occurred without knowing what that is or how it ties in with the rest of the story. The visual and aural impact of this first representation of the unconscious in both these films is the clue to how both directors subsequently allow the audience to understand the narrative significance of the unconscious. The stopping of the narrative by such an attention grabbing event

keeps that moment in the viewer's memory throughout the rest of the film. Armed with this initial impact both filmmakers then go on to construct their narratives on the basis of both the conscious actions of their protagonists and the appearance of the unconscious of these protagonists. In typical film narrative fashion, the story follows the events that occur as a result of the conscious actions of the protagonists. Alongside these events however there exist the events of the unconscious of the protagonists. Both directors weave these conscious and unconscious events together to produce the full story of the protagonist. However, despite the structural similarities between both films they differ in presentation due to the way they address the original trauma. In *Marnie* this is hidden until the end of the film in *Three Colours: Blue* it is revealed in the opening sequence. For this reason the next section will analyse each film individually.

Marnie

In Alfred Hitchcock's 1964 film *Marnie* there are seven occasions when the unconscious of the protagonist is portrayed on screen. In this film the visible presence of Marnie's unconscious takes the form of a red wash which fills the entire screen. The colour of this wash refers back to Marnie's initial traumatic experience when she attacked and killed a sailor whom she believed to be attacking her mother. The red of the wash references the red of the sailor's blood-stained shirt during the attack. Although as Robin Wood points out there are two occasions when the trigger for these red suffusions (as he labels them) originate with the colour red on a white background - firstly when Marnie spills red ink on her white shirt and secondly at the race course when she sees a jockey whose livery is white with red spots²⁸². These two incidents reflect the initial trauma of the white shirt of the sailor being stained with blood. Thus it is through colour that Marnie's unconscious is linked to her original traumatic event. However, unlike *Three Colours: Blue* where the audience were shown the initial traumatic event at the start of the film and can build their hypotheses regarding the appearance of the unconscious on their knowledge of this event, in *Marnie* the audience are not aware of the initial traumatic event until the

282 Wood, Robin. *Hitchcock's Films Revisited*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. p.175

final scene of the film. As a result the representation of the unconscious of the protagonist in *Marnie* is a more direct echo of the way the unconscious presents itself to the conscious mind in the case of repression. For in this film the audience is given the same amount of knowledge as the character of Marnie for most of the film. Neither Marnie nor the audience is aware that these moments of unconscious appearing on screen which represent the return of the repressed memory of her childhood are connected to her murder of the sailor. Marnie is unaware of this connection because she forgets the audience because Hitchcock withholds this information from them. It is this lack of knowledge, or lack of a reference point regarding the red washes that are the strongest evidence that this film is attempting a reasonably accurate portrayal of the way the conscious mind experiences the return of the repressed. However, at the same time, as this film is a mainstream Hollywood production the mystery of these red washes are overtaken throughout most of the film by Marnie's acknowledged difficulties – her propensity for grand theft and her reluctance to become romantically involved with Mark Rutland (Sean Connery). Thus despite the fact that there is a major difference between *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* with regards to the evidence or knowledge that the audience can use in order to understand the appearance of the unconscious both films follow a similar narrative pattern whereby the dominant story of a troubled young woman is continuously interrupted by an interior moment which indicates an extra-diegetic event of some significance.

There are two types of event which trigger the return of the repressed in *Marnie* as indicated by the visible presence of a red wash flooding the screen – the presence of the colour red in a dominant object within view of Marnie and a reproduction of the weather condition of the night the sailor was murdered. The sound and presence of similar weather conditions to those which occurred at the time of the murder are reproduced only once in the film, in the scene where Marnie is working with Mark in his office and a thunder storm occurs. Marnie's reaction to the storm is both the same and a different reaction to that which she has when she sees the colour red under certain conditions. It is the same in that the thunderstorm occasions a moment of the return of the repressed which is visualised by a red wash on screen. It is different in

that her reaction extends beyond this internal moment towards external action. In this moment Marnie runs from the storm and is visibly terrified by it. This outward physical reaction to an event which actually occurs in the physical world, as opposed to an internal reaction to everyday objects which happen to be red in colour, allows the audience to begin to understand the character of Marnie in more depth. For it is within the prior knowledge and experience of the world that the audience has that certain people are afraid of thunderstorms. Marnie's reaction to the thunderstorm puts her character within the frame of reference of people with which the audience was already familiar. At the same time the thunderstorm is also an occasion whereby the screen is flooded by a red wash despite the fact of there being no red object in the room for Marnie to react to it gives the opportunity to link Marnie's previous interior moments to an actual occurrence in the physical world and to a knowledge that the audience has of that world. In this way the scene in Mark's office links together the conscious and unconscious narrative threads of this film and manages to give both a psychological and psychoanalytical motivation to the actions of the character of Marnie. The dominant method that the audience has for following the narrative of this film is to follow the actions of Marnie and these are presented in sequential order. Marnie steals a great deal of money, she spends some of it on gifts for her mother and in order not to be arrested she must move to a new city. This narrative thread is the narrative thread of the conscious, active life of the character of Marnie and as with the majority of films the actions of the character are given a psychological motivation. Thus prior to the scene in Mark's office this narrative thread has allowed the audience to form a basic understanding of the character of Marnie. Her success as a thief allows her to be economically independent and wealthy, her continuing success as a thief indicates that she is an intelligent woman, at the same time we learn that she has a difficult relationship with her mother and that she suffers from nightmares. Marnie's violent reaction to the thunderstorm can be read along with her nightmares and her problematic relationship with her mother as indicative of another aspect of her troubled nature. What at first seemed to be a character that was confident in her abilities as a thief and who enjoyed being able to outsmart a fussy, small-minded, middle-aged man (as other Hitchcock female characters do e.g. Marion

in *Psycho*) has subsequently been shown to be a great deal more unhappy and unsatisfied than was first indicated. At this stage in the film Hitchcock has not yet given the audience any indication as to why this is the case. A few scenes later we learn of Marnie's difficult childhood. "We were poor, we were grindingly poor." Shortly after that we learn of her abhorrence of sexual relationships. In a film which does not refer to the unconscious of the protagonist these explanations (poverty, growing up without a father) would be sufficient to explain these aspects of Marnie's character and behaviour which appear problematic. For in a psychologically based narrative, Marnie's isolation from the social world and her compulsion to secure financial independence for herself and her mother; "You don't need to baby-sit, I give you plenty of money Mother" are sufficiently motivated by the fact that she grew up penniless and without a father. In this film however the dominant motivation for the actions of the character of Marnie comes from her unconscious in the form of her repressed memory. The sequence of events described above are the part of the narrative which follows the conscious and active aspect of her character and is therefore easily understood by an audience who have prior experience of watching films. However this knowledge is not sufficient to enable the audience to fully understand the character of Marnie or the journey she undertakes in the film due to the fact that motivation is psychoanalytically rather than psychologically based in this film. The flooding of the screen with a red wash on occasions throughout the film is a moment where Hitchcock attempts to visually reproduce the experiences of the character of Marnie at the moment when her repressed memory returns. In representing the unconscious in this way Hitchcock wants the audience to experience this moment as the character of Marnie experiences it. Thus, it arrives without warning, it is fleeting and it cannot be related to anything in the prior knowledge of the audience. As such these are moments of surprise and confusion for the audience, they appear to be outside of the narrative as their insertion does not reference anything which has gone before, nor are they referred to after their occurrence. The use of the red wash during the thunderstorm scene in Mark's office is the first moment where these so far inexplicable moments in the film are directly linked to the main narrative thread of the conscious actions of Marnie, as the red wash is this time

inspired by a thunderstorm and not a red object. The link that is now made between the thunderstorm and the flooding of the screen with a red wash indicates to the audience that they will be able to understand the significance of these red washes at some point in the film. The very normality of a person being afraid of thunderstorms is something that is easily understood, when the red wash occurs at the same time it gives the suggestion that this occurrence too is part of everyday life and as a result the audience will be able to understand its significance to the narrative at some point. Particularly as there is no red object in this scene which occasioned the appearance of the wash the audience can no longer give into the tendency to dismiss these moments as being moments of spectacle only and outside of the narrative. Their being connected to the thunderstorm links them into the main narrative thread of the film and while at this stage their narrative significance is not fully understood it becomes apparent in this scene that not only will they connect to the main narrative thread but that their existence may in fact support and develop the overall narrative of the entire film.

The main impact on narrative sequencing of unconscious motivation is that actions appear to be unmotivated, or rather not sufficiently motivated. As a result of the main protagonist being motivated by their unconscious activities they can appear to the audience to be cold and aloof, perhaps even impenetrable due to the fact that as the motivation for their actions is unconscious it is not displayed on film in the same way that a psychological motivation for action would be. Therefore while the audience is put in the position of the protagonist for the duration of time when their unconscious breaks through their conscious thought and in this way appears to have a greater understanding of the character than is usually the case, at the same time these moments are free from any links between character that usually exist in film and as a result the connection between cause and effect is not as clear here as it is in other films. The final scene in *Marnie* is the only moment in the film where we have sufficient explanation for all of Marnie's actions leading up to that moment. Thus for the majority of this film it has been difficult to link Marnie's behaviour and actions to any cause that might comprehensively explain them. Instead this film evokes a series of questions in the audience with regards to the character of Marnie and while the

main narrative thread offers a partial answer for some of these questions, it is not sufficient in itself to answer these questions completely.

The question that arises is why does Marnie steal? There are two answers to this question provided in the film neither of which is entirely satisfactory. Initially it seems that Marnie enjoys the challenge of living her life in this way and that she wants to provide financial independence for herself and her mother, an independence that might not be possible through conventional means. However Marnie's subsequent unhappiness and her acceptance of a low grade clerical job in order to be in a position to steal nullifies the image of the glamorous and cool Marnie that we see dropping a key in the grating at the train station in order to cover her tracks. Equally, the fact that she continues to steal indicates that perhaps she is not quite financially solid, more importantly the reunion between Marnie and her mother shows Mrs. Edgar (Louise Latham) in such a poor light (she slaps Marnie and lavishes her attention on a neighbour's child) that one wonders why Marnie would care about this woman's financial solvency. And that is one of the questions which can only be answered with reference to the role of unconscious motivation in this film. Once we become aware of Marnie's initial trauma at the end of the film various answers to the question as to why she steals can be put forward which are a great deal more satisfactory than those offered by the narrative so far. Marnie's killing of the sailor originated in an act of economic necessity. As a young single mother Mrs. Edgar turned to prostitution for a living. Were she more financially independent, there would not have been a sailor in the house for Marnie to kill. But, as Mrs. Edgar recalls also in the final scene even Marnie's conception was linked to the world of economics and material goods. Bernice Edgar offered to have sex with Marnie's father as she wanted to own his blue sweater. Marnie was conceived as a result of this exchange of goods and services. Thus Marnie's birth and childhood were marked by poverty and financial insecurity. Given Mrs. Edgar's profession as a prostitute when Marnie was a child we can say that Marnie's unconscious mind links sex not only with fear but also with financial prosperity. While Bernice Edgar worked as a prostitute she and Marnie had money (although presumably not a steady source of income), when Bernice stopped working after her "accident" their poverty

increased. Therefore when we come to the final scene in the film and the red washes are then explained by reference to the death of the sailor, other aspects of Marnie's personality are also explained, this time by reference to her unconscious mind. With this new knowledge of the circumstances of Marnie's original traumatic event we can state with more certainty than before that Marnie steals in order to forget that she has killed (a displacement activity) and to ensure that she will never kill again. As it was poverty that drove Bernice Edgar into prostitution, Marnie ensures that she will not suffer the same fate as long as she continues to steal enough money for them both. Thus through stealing, Marnie reduces her chances of killing again. As a displacement activity the stealing works to distract Marnie from the repressed memories that are continuously trying to surface. As the film progresses this form of displacement becomes less and less successful as displacements are wont to do, until eventually it fails altogether. This pattern of successful robbery as a displacement begins to breakdown when Marnie is caught by Mark after successfully stealing from Rutland's safe. It is not coincidental that the job Marnie has found in Philadelphia was with Mark's firm. As a smart woman who spends her working time observing others and their movements in order to best plan her robberies it is more than likely that Marnie was aware of who Mark was and the firm he represented when he visited Strutt's office. That Mark noticed Marnie there is made clear from the start of the film: "the brunette with the legs". What is not often commented upon is that this remark when contrasted with Strutt's comment that Marnie was "always pulling her skirt down over her knees as though they were a national treasure" suggests that Marnie was playing coquette, showing her legs to the attractive Mark Rutland and hiding them from Strutt. It is likely therefore that Marnie was attracted to Mark and was aware of his connection to Rutland's in Philadelphia. If this was the case then her applying for a job at Rutland's can be seen as a move towards the dismantling of stealing as a displacement for her repressed memories as by bringing herself to the attention of Mark Rutland she is placing herself in a position where she is recognised as a thief. If being caught is what Marnie both fears and desires it is at Rutland's where this event takes place. Once she has been caught it becomes difficult for her to steal again as this pattern has been broken and a new one established in its place.

Mark's response when he catches Marnie after the theft is to propose marriage. The new life that this proposal instigates prevents Marnie from stealing until she reaches a crisis point and goes once more to steal from the safe at Rutland's. This time despite her desire she cannot bring herself to remove the money from the safe. The next scene is the flashback scene where Marnie recalls her original trauma.

Without the final scene in this film which brings to light Marnie's past it would be difficult to give a satisfactory answer to the question – why does Marnie steal? This film is structured in such a way that the main motivating factors for Marnie's actions and behaviours (that is her unconscious repressed memories) are withheld until the very end. In this film traditional psychological motivations for action and behaviour do not work as the prime motivator arises from psychoanalytical causes. As this is the case, and as Hitchcock (like Kieślowski) wants to present as authentic portrayal of the moment of the return of the repressed as possible, in order for this portrayal to be genuine the motivational causes for action must be withheld until the end of the film. It is only when we discover what had happened to Marnie in the past that we can begin to make sense of her actions throughout the film. It is in this final scene that it becomes apparent that the dominant force of narrative agency in this film was the unconscious of the protagonist. Initially the appearance of the unconscious through the return of the repressed represented by a red wash on screen appeared to disrupt or stop the narrative of consciousness such was the suddenness of its appearance and the lack of context surrounding it. However, the repetition of this red wash and its visual power indicated that it had a narrative significance. As the film progressed further knowledge of the character of Marnie including her fear of thunderstorms linked her conscious and unconscious elements together and combined to give narrative meaning to the return of the repressed. However, it is only at the end of the film that it becomes clear that the main source of narrative agency, that is, the main motivation for the actions of the character of Marnie was her unconscious.

Three Colours: Blue

Three Colours: Blue opens with sound, the noise of a car as it drives through a tunnel. From the beginning of this film then, Kieślowski indicates both the importance of sound to the narrative and by focusing on the material world (as represented by the

car), the clarity of division he will make between the conscious and unconscious world in order to allow the audience to easily recognise the unconscious as being different (though no less real) to consciousness when it makes its appearance in the film. This opening section of the film follows the car journey until the crash that claims the lives of Julie's husband and daughter. While Kieślowski, unlike Hitchcock shows us the traumatic event that brings on repression in his protagonist, he introduces us to that protagonist only when the event has occurred. Thus, we do not get to know Julie during this car journey, rather our first introduction to this character occurs after the accident.

With Julie we know she has suffered a trauma. We watch her collapsing under that trauma from the start of the film. Everything we see of Julie in the hospital before the appearance of the unconscious is disjointed. In a series of short scenes with very little dialogue and no non-diegetic music we see Julie wake up in hospital after the accident, hear that her husband and daughter were killed, attempt and fail to commit suicide, receive a small television from Olivier (who is not introduced or explained to the viewer) and watch the funeral of her husband and daughter on television. This disjointedness is a good representation of the lack of objectivity that occurs after such an event. The outside world seems insignificant in comparison to the personal suffering. The audience is piecing together the story from these various events; all seem to indicate the effect of the trauma on Julie. The first appearance of the unconscious in this film initially seems to follow this pattern. Kieślowski introduces the events that occur in the hospital without any preamble and without an orientating establishing shot for the audience. First we watch an event take place (such as the crash of glass as Julie breaks the window to distract the nurse in order to steal pills to commit suicide), then we are presented with the information that allows us to make sense of this initial event. Being aware of the trauma and having Julie's reaction to the immediate aftermath of the trauma presented in such a disjointed way makes the first appearance of the unconscious seem to be another in a series of events that the audience is initially confused by, but which soon make sense (like the breaking of the window). Knowing the initial trauma and having Julie's reaction to it presented in a disjointed manner allows the audience in this film to feel that they

understand the significance of the appearance of the unconscious in some way. Even if this initial sense of understanding is tentative, the knowledge of Julie's trauma gives the audience an event to which they can relate back this sudden appearance of the unconscious.

The first ten minutes of this film are crucial to establishing of the two separate narrative threads that run throughout *Three Colours: Blue*. It is an example of how Kieślowski keeps these two narratives separate and distinct enough that they can be recognised as representing two different parts of the psyche and manages to fuse them both together so that they make sense under the overarching notion of the narrative of consciousness. The opening shot of a car wheel illustrates this point quite succinctly. Firstly, it introduces the style that Kieślowski will use in order to allow the audience to become familiar with the unconscious on screen and secondly it marks his use of realism with regard to the conscious. Kieślowski opens the film with this shot of a car wheel travelling down the road, the shot is a tightly framed close-up and for a moment, until he pulls back his camera to get perspective we cannot completely distinguish what we are looking at. This is a technique that he will use throughout this section: the introduction of an image, followed by the explanation of that image, its place in the narrative. The initial shot of this image does not make sense by itself; it needs the following shots in order for its meaning to be revealed. Kieślowski repeats this technique three times in the course of the opening ten minutes, each time presenting us with an image followed by an explanation of "what we just saw". We see a feather in close up, fluttering in the shot immediately after the car crash, this is followed by the camera pulling away to reveal the Doctor arriving to talk with Julie. Initially, we don't understand what the feather signifies, with the subsequent shots of the Doctor it receives its meaning, it becomes the first thing that Julie sees when she regains consciousness after the accident. The second image without context is one of a glass window being smashed by a rock. This is followed by Julie hiding and a nurse coming to investigate the incident. The following sequence of events indicates to us that it was Julie who broke the glass in order to lure the nurse out of the dispensary where she goes to attempt suicide. The final image without context begins with a shot of Julie lying in bed, a shot familiar to us at this stage in the film. The

next shot reveals the blurry image of a man in a suit who approaches her bed and places a small portable TV on the stand beside her. He switches it on to show her how it works. It is only then that the explanation for this short sequence occurs. A short conversation between Julie and the man indicate to us that he has brought the TV so that she can watch the televised funeral of her famous husband and daughter.

This pattern sets up an expectation that a shot which is initially confusing for the audience will subsequently be explained. Kieślowski follows this pattern when he introduces the unconscious although here he withholds the explanation, it does not arrive immediately. This allows those appearances of the unconscious to be distinguished from these shots which establish the pattern. In the shots of the car wheel, the feather, the glass breaking and the TV screen there is a rational explanation following the initial image which makes sense of that image. In the shots which depict the unconscious of Julie there is no such subsequent explanation immediately following. These shots initially follow the pattern established in the first ten minutes of the film whereby a cut to an object, or in this case to the screen filling with a blue wash, operates to disorient the audience, making them question what they are viewing and what is the significance of this image within the narrative of the film. The moments when the unconscious of the character appear on screen work to disorient the audience and as a pattern has been established whereby a shot whose significance to the narrative will be immediately explained, this leads to an expectation that these disorientating shots of the unconscious will also equally be explained by the subsequent shot. When these moments of the appearance of the unconscious are not immediately explained by the next shot the following two narrative consequences occur. Firstly, the breaking of the established pattern indicates to the audience that these shots are of a different kind to those which have gone before. Secondly, the established pattern leaves the audience with the expectation that the shot will be explained. In the shots of the car wheel, the feather, the glass breaking and the TV screen the shots which follow on from these images provide a meaning for these images by reference to events in the physical world. The lack of an immediate explanation for the shots of the unconscious of the character is the first indication that these shots may not refer to events from the physical world

and that they are shots of something that is of a different type to that which has gone before. By repeating only the first half of this pattern a distinction is made between occurrences and objects that initially appear to be unusual and incomprehensible but which are followed by an explanatory shot and occurrences which are so unusual in the context of a psychological narrative that they cannot be immediately explained. This establishes the existence of an element within the narrative whose function is not immediately made clear. And while the pattern of cutting to a shot whose meaning is not apparent followed by a cut to a shot which makes sense of that first shot is copied only in the first half of this pattern for the appearance of the unconscious, nevertheless the fact that the pattern identifies the fact that there will be an explanation leaves the audience in expectation for that explanation. As the explanation is not immediately forthcoming in this case the audience must begin to piece together the explanation for themselves. This sets up a narrative structure of anticipation and places the audience in the position of gathering clues as to the significance of these appearances of the unconscious throughout the film.

In *Three Colours: Blue* this structure is elaborated upon by the fact that we are given specific indicators that connect the loss of Julie's child to the colour blue (which colour subsequently in the form of a full screen wash represents the return of the repressed). Firstly, in the short glimpse we have of the child before her death we see her eat a blue lollipop. Secondly, we discover that the child's bedroom was decorated in blue and was referred to as the blue room. Thirdly, the only item that Julie keeps from her old house is a blue mobile from the child's room. At the same time we become aware that Julie is attempting to repress her grief at the loss of her child. She requests that everything be cleared out of the child's room before her return to the house after her release from hospital, not wanting to encounter any physical reminders of the child's life. She discovers a blue lollipop in her handbag and devours it as if in an attempt to swallow and thus banish all memories of the child. These attempts to destroy all personal objects which evoke the memory of her dead child are extended when she moves to Paris to include an attempt to isolate herself from contact with children in her new life. At the estate agents she specifies that she wants to rent an apartment in a building with no children. The cumulative

effect of these scenes is that it becomes apparent that Julie is attempting to repress or deny her grief at the death of her child. As a connection between the child and the colour blue is established early on in the film, the appearances of the blue washes which indicate the return of the repressed can be seen to indicate that this form of repression is not entirely successful. In the case of linking the blue washes which represent the unconscious of the character of Julie to her repressed grief at the death of her daughter, the connection between the young girl and the colour blue established at the beginning of the film make this aspect of understanding the significance of these blue washes relatively easy.

Midway through the film there is a series of connected scenes which indicate in a more explicit and concrete manner that Julie has been repressing her grief for the loss of her child and that this aspect of her repression has not been entirely successful. This section of the film begins when Julie discovers a mouse and her newborn offspring in a store cupboard in her apartment. She is extremely upset at this discovery and seeks a variety of solutions to the problem including an attempt to move apartment in order to avoid the mice. She eventually borrows the neighbour's cat and leaves him alone in the apartment whilst she goes to the swimming pool, her place of refuge and sanctuary. While there she discloses to another neighbour that she is afraid to return to the apartment to face the results, i.e. the death and destruction of a young family. When her neighbour leaves to clean up after the cat a group of young girls, all around the same age as Julie's daughter enter the pool (previously we have only seen Julie alone in the pool) and Julie responds by submerging her entire body in the water. In this series of scenes we see Julie become upset at the presence of what she has attempted to avoid so far: any reminders of her daughter or her own role as a mother which has been cut short. Her strong reaction to the mice in the apartment comes as a surprise as up until this point in the film Julie has maintained a calm exterior. This sequence makes explicit Julie's repression of her grief at the loss of her daughter. She runs from the mother mouse and her children and she submerges herself in the pool when surrounded by girls of the same age as her daughter.

Once this connection between the appearance of Julie's unconscious and her repressed grief at the loss of her daughter has been established, the remainder of the film focuses on the other main source of narrative progression: Julie's repression of her creative talents as a composer. While small indications have been given earlier in the film that Julie worked with her husband on his compositions it is only in the second part of the film that it is indicated that her work was creative rather than corrective. There are two scenes which connect Julie with music at the beginning of the film. When she returns from hospital to the family home she finds a piece of music and begins to play it on the piano. The camera cuts between the notes being played by Julie's hand and the notes written on the score, indicating that Julie is following the notes as she plays. This pattern then changes as Julie continues to play but the next cut to the score follows a musical staff without any notes on it. The camera pans along the series of lines as Julie continues to play music indicating that here Julie is composing rather than following music that has already been written.

Irena Paulus and Graham McMaster refer to this scene as follows:

The scene represents the internal moment of the musician, and everyone who can read a score and can follow the theme, will see how deeply it is thought out. Alterations between the score and Julie's face are edited according to the thematic structure, that is, according to the alternation of musical phrases and sentences...

Switching from the score to Julie's face (according to all the rules of musical form) will end when there are no more musical notes on the paper, with however the theme (in the echoing, unearthly performance on the piano) still playing. Julie follows the empty paper with her eyes, and the music still goes on in her head. She, then, is composing, imagining the continued progression of the melody. Thus here, in the earliest phase of the film, for those who know how to listen, the answer to the journalist's question "Did you compose the music for your husband?" is already given.²⁸³

However, although Paulus and McMaster read this scene as indicating early in the film that it is established that Julie is a composer there are problems with this reading

²⁸³ Paulus, Irena and Graham McMaster. "Music in Krzysztof Kieslowski's Film *Three Colours: Blue*". *A Rhapsody in Shades of Blue: The Reflections of a Musician.* *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 30.1 (1999) p.70

for the general viewer and for the way this information is presented in the structure of the narrative. As Paulus and McMaster indicate confirmation that Julie does compose is restricted to viewers who “can read and score and can follow a theme”. Even for these viewers the fact that this scene is presented surrounded by scenes of the repression of Julie’s grief which is the main narrative focus of this section of the film means that the significance of this scene can pass unnoticed. It is only retrospectively, when we watch Julie compose with Olivier in a similar manner to the way she composes here, that this scene can be read as evidence of Julie’s creativity. The second scene which connects Julie with music at the start of the film is when she collects the score of *The Concert for the Unification of Europe* from the printers and throws it into a passing rubbish truck. This scene compares to the earlier one where she requested that everything should be removed from her daughter’s room in that it is a destruction of any evidence of her former life and thus can be read as an active form of repression. However, this is an act that is linked to the return of the repressed as the musical score that Julie destroys is the same music that plays when her unconscious bursts through the censorship of her conscious mind.

The musical phrase which plays as a representation of the return of the repressed throughout the film is also given an onscreen presence in the form of a busker who plays the same melody with a flute outside Julie’s café. He appears throughout the film, once when Olivier is with Julie and comments on the music, thus confirming its diegetic status in this form. This thematic music is made familiar to the audience throughout the film, however, its main connection seems to be with the loss of Julie’s child and husband in that it plays at moments when Julie’s repressed grief returns and it is the music that her husband was composing before he died. There is little apart from the scene of piano playing described above that links Julie directly to the music and its composition. This changes gradually over the course of a series of scenes beginning with the knowledge that the score has not been destroyed, Olivier, who co-composed with Patrice has kept a copy and has been commissioned to finish it. With this knowledge Julie arrives at his house and he plays his version of the score for her. Julie tells him of the text that Patrice was to use to accompany the music a strong indication that she was familiar with the work although not yet indicating that she

composed. Later she makes a return visit to Olivier and asks to see what he has composed. The score appears on screen with a blue wash and Julie's hand traces the notes as before. This time we hear Julie and Olivier discuss the composition together with both making suggestions for alterations. Finally in the penultimate sequence of the film we see Julie working on the score. She calls Olivier to say that it is finished and her status as composer is confirmed when he indicates that he will not publish the music unless she agrees to be credited as co-composer. The next shot shows Julie once again trace the notes on the score and this time we hear the lyrics along with the music as the camera pans to the final montage of Julie and Olivier, Antoine, Julie's mother, Lucille and Sandrine all the major characters who have aided Julie in releasing her repression.

As with *Marnie* it is only in the final scene of this film that the unconscious is revealed to have been the main source of narrative agency. Marnie revisited her original trauma and remembered the killing of the sailor with the help of her husband and mother. It is only when this initial trauma is revealed that the various narrative strands in this film come together. *Three Colours: Blue* follows a similar pattern at the end. Here Julie returns to her life as a composer once more no longer repressing her creative talents. In this film while a connection is made at the beginning between Julie's daughter and the colour blue nevertheless the first appearance of the return of the repressed as represented by a blue wash and a musical motif is still disruptive of the main narrative of consciousness as this appearance of the unconscious of the character appears suddenly and with only a limited context. The blue colour refers to her daughter but the repression of her grief is not clear at this stage nor is her connection with the musical score apparent yet. As in *Marnie* the repetition of the appearance of the character's unconscious indicates that it has narrative significance and this is stronger in this film due to the connections between Julie's daughter and the colour blue. However, the significance of her musical repression only becomes clear at the close of the film and like *Marnie* it is only then that the use of the unconscious as the main source of narrative agency is revealed.

The narrative of the unconscious then must be worked out, must be pieced together. It is a narrative whose main events do not follow on from each other in a

linear, rational fashion. Thus the 'story' of the unconscious is a narrative of discovery. It is a questing story. A narrative in which nothing can be taken for granted. If we experience narrative as indicated by David Bordwell as a participant in the narrative, as a questioning participant in the narrative, we make hypotheses based on events that have already occurred and/or on our own previous knowledge of human behaviour. None of these skills has any relevance when it comes to understanding the narrative arc of the operation of the unconscious as it presents itself to the conscious mind. This raises difficulties in the case of *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* if we follow Bordwell's argument that our understanding of narrative depends on our making hypotheses and suppositions based on the information given to date; how do we follow a narrative without these tools? Following the narrative of the unconscious requires us to abandon our traditional methods of discovering meaning in narrative, rather than make hypotheses and have them confirmed or denied or put aside we must wait until the end of the narrative in this case and retrospectively go back over the events that have occurred in order for them to take on their narrative role and significance in the light of what has occurred at the end of the story. This method of following narrative and of discovering meaning in narrative is directly opposite to the traditional method of following a narrative. A new method must be learned in this case.

The retrospective imposition of a narrative structure upon the operations of the unconscious is an act that is performed by the conscious mind. This is done in order for the conscious mind to gain some understanding of these unconscious acts. However, the conscious mind operates on the principle of the rational, the logical; the opposite to the working method of the unconscious. The narrative structure of the unconscious then is a structure that is imposed logically on an aspect of human nature that embraces the illogical. This is part of the reason why the narrative of the unconscious can only be constructed after all of the events are known and the episode has come to some conclusion, prior to this moment all of the operations of the unconscious (whilst following their own system) appear to the conscious mind as random, illogical, unconnected events. The narrative of the unconscious then is thus more dependant on the final event than the traditional narrative for it to be defined as

narrative. It appears to be the case, that a narrative structure is imposed upon the unconscious by the conscious mind and that this structure can only be imposed retrospectively. It makes sense then to state that a person cannot follow the narrative of the unconscious in the same way that they can follow a traditional narrative, for as it is progressing the events of the unconscious appear to the conscious mind to have no connection with each other.

Conclusion

My part of the work is to make the film. Your part is to find something in the film, or perhaps not. For me it's always important to hear viewers' interpretations. They turn out to be very different to my intentions. I don't hide my intentions. I speak about them - but not about my interpretations.²⁸⁴

This thesis has examined a phenomenon that is unusual in cinema – the use of a character's unconscious as a motivating factor for action and narrative progression. The three directors chosen for this project Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski have consistently explored both the representation of a character's unconscious on film and the narrative possibilities that arise as a result of that representation. In chronological order, the first of these films *Un Chien Andalou*, is probably the most experimental in its refusal of any causal motivation for character action other than the unconscious of the protagonists. In form as well as content this film edits against the grain using the technique of shot-reverse-shot to emphasise non-linear, unconscious connections that echo Jacques Lacan's description of the metonymic capabilities of the unconscious where each word/symbol/thing has a multiplicity of meanings. The films of Hitchcock and Kieślowski are not as radically experimental with form as that of *Un Chien Andalou*. However, their content and in particular the narrative progression of their films equals the experiments Buñuel made in *Un Chien Andalou*. Hitchcock's *Psycho* and *Marnie* present characters whose behaviour appears unmotivated, both to themselves and to the audience unless an unconscious motivation is posited. Kieślowski's search for ways to portray what he called "the inner life" of a character on screen led to the fruitful depiction of the unconscious of the protagonists in his final three films as has been shown in this thesis.

In addition to the films of these directors this thesis has also explored the use of a character's unconscious in the dream films of early cinema and in the psycho-killer genre. As with the films of Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski what distinguishes these films is the representation of a character's unconscious on screen and in the case of the psycho-killer genre the use of that representation for causal motivation for character actions. Unlike the genre of the dream film, the psycho-killer genre

□ Kieślowski, Krzysztof. Interview. By Jonathan Romney. *The Guardian*. 15th October 1993.

remains robust and popular. It is the dominant genre where the unconscious of the protagonist is portrayed and works as a motivation for character action, usually murderous action. Tudor and Indick argue persuasively that Hitchcock's *Psycho* is the originator of this genre and that the development of the genre led to implicit rather than explicit references to the unconscious of a character. Nevertheless a psychopathic killer is often revealed to have had a childhood trauma, its lack of resolution being indicated as the cause of the murderous actions. The strength of this genre leaves little openings for films which depict the unconscious of a character that does not have murderous intentions. In contrast the films in this thesis reference an unconscious that might be more familiar to the average film spectator. Future research on this area would be useful to investigate the evolution of unconscious motivation from the broad appeal of the early dream films to the more particular appeal of the psycho-killer genre.

This thesis has also explored specific texts²⁸⁵ from Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan that are not frequently used in the discipline of film studies and has fruitfully applied these theories to the question of unconscious character motivation in film. Further research in this area would allow for a broader use of psychoanalysis as applied to films, particularly as there has not been much research into the unconscious motivation of a character to date. The analysis of particular events in the lives of these three directors – Buñuel's involvement with the Surrealist movement, Hitchcock's move to America at the height of the popularisation of psychoanalysis in that country and Kieślowski's involvement with the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement – has also yielded new approaches to examining the life of the director in connection to the films made. As this thesis has stated the period of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement coincided with a period of great experimentation by Kieślowski with regards to developing techniques to represent "the inner life." Furthermore this thesis has shown that the techniques he experimented with during this period were later refined and developed and were the basis of the methods used

²⁸⁵ Freud's texts "The Unconscious", "Repression" and "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" and Lacan's texts "Beyond the reality Principle" and "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" have not frequently been referred to in detail in the discipline of film studies.

to represent the unconscious of a character in the *Three Colours: Trilogy*. This connection has not previously been made with regards to Kieślowski's work.

The final two chapters, on techniques for representing the unconscious of a character on film and the repercussions of that representation on narrative structure, represent a novel method of examining films. By undertaking a close analysis of the narrative structure of *Marnie* and *Three Colours: Blue* a pattern emerged in which the techniques used by both directors to represent the unconscious of a character led to a striking similarity in narrative structure. This connection is particularly interesting as there is no evidence to suggest that Kieślowski was influenced by Hitchcock's film when making *Three Colours: Blue*. Although lack of evidence cannot be taken as lack of influence, it seems unlikely that Kieślowski was influenced by the earlier film. Apart from the similarities discussed here the style and storytelling technique of both directors was quite different. Rather it seems that in looking for ways to represent the unconscious of a character – particularly repression and the return of the repressed – both directors independently discovered similar techniques and a similar narrative structure.

This thesis has examined a series of films from Buñuel, Hitchcock and Kieślowski and argued that the portrayal of the unconscious of the protagonists in these films becomes a structuring device for the narrative of these films. In addition this project has argued that the dream films of early cinema feature portrayals of a character's unconscious while the psycho-killer genre has a narrative which is based on the structuring device of a protagonist's unconscious. The films analysed range in date from 1900 to 1994. This broad time span suggests a possible historical evolution of the unconscious of a character as seen as a narrative device. Rather than a linear historical evolution of this type of narrative device this thesis has discovered certain time periods in which the portrayal of a character's unconscious on film flourishes. The two dominant time periods are *circa* 1900 to 1910 and *circa* 1940 to 1960. The dream films of the period 1900 to 1910 were a popular type of film in this era. As Tom Gunning indicates:

Dreams materialise frequently in pre-1908 cinema. The discontinuity between real life and dreams forms a favourite subject of early cinema,

attracting filmmakers between 1900 – 1906 more than at any other point in film history.²⁸⁶

It is Gunning who also names this period in cinematic history the “cinema of attractions” arguing that the purpose of films at this time was one of display: “supplying pleasure through an exciting spectacle.”²⁸⁷ This spectacle was often a mixture of the diegetic – boxing and dance films were popular, and the non-diegetic – the display of cinematic techniques such as slow motion, multiple exposure etc. The dream films of this period qualify in this category on both counts. As with the psychoanalytically influenced films of the 1940s and 1950s these early films were a product of their time, although in this case their production was influenced by the type of films being made at the time rather than any outside trend in psychoanalysis. However, one must be alert to the fact that the first edition of Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* was published in 1900. Further research on the broad cultural impact of this publication and its influence or otherwise on film topics at this time may reveal a heretofore unknown influence on early filmmakers.

The popularisation of psychoanalysis in America after World War Two is discussed in Chapter Three in relation to Hitchcock’s films which are predicated on a character’s unconscious: *Spellbound* (1945), *Psycho* (1960) and *Marnie* (1964). This discussion also makes reference to the fact that Hitchcock was not alone at this time in making films on this topic and it refers to a number of films from a variety of directors which feature psychoanalysts and references to a character’s unconscious. Hitchcock’s films on this topic are noteworthy for the diversity of the actions motivated by the unconscious of the protagonists. However, one of these films only has been influential in instigating a film genre. *Psycho* has influenced the psycho-killer film in which narrative events are subsequently explained by reference to the protagonists’ unconscious. This genre whose evolution is traced by William Indick

²⁸⁶Gunning, Tom. *D.W. Griffith and the Origins of American Narrative Film: The Early Years at Biograph*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994. p.116

²⁸⁷ Gunning, Tom. “The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde.” *Early Cinema: Space/Frame/Narrative* Ed. Thomas Elsaesser and Adam Barker. London: BFI Publishing, 1990. pp. 58-9

and Andrew Tudor²⁸⁸ remains popular and is perhaps the only historical period whereby the unconscious of a protagonist used as a structuring device has had a consistent lifespan. Further research in the area of cultural studies would be useful to investigate correlations between audience enjoyment of these films and their depiction of the unconscious as a source of malevolent action.

This thesis has presented links between psychoanalysis and two of the directors chosen for this research; Buñuel and Hitchcock. Research and printed interviews with the director show Buñuel's personal knowledge of Freudian writings, and his membership of the Surrealist group in Paris is further evidence of his interest in the workings of the unconscious. Hitchcock on the other hand has left no indication of his personal engagement or otherwise with psychoanalysis. However, his move to America at a time when psychoanalysis was popularised combined with his working with many enthusiasts for this therapy indicate an awareness of this type of analysis and the commercial potential of its use in a film which is confirmed by this description published during publicity for *Spellbound*:

You would have to make a distinction...between psychological films and psychoanalytical films. The latter, I think, can be dismissed as a passing phase. It probably is true that the war and the world's general emotional upset have made the public more receptive to these explorations of the subconscious. But the run on films of this sort is due most likely to good old commercial Hollywood. Our business always moves in waves and the psychoanalytical film seems capital at the moment.²⁸⁹

These topics are elaborated upon in Chapter Three entitled "Life Influences". This chapter engages with the most significant social, cultural and historic moments in the lives of the three directors chosen for this project in relation to the influence these events had on their choice of a protagonist's unconscious as a thematic choice for their films. In this context it argues that the Cinema of Moral Anxiety movement had the most important influence on Kieślowski with regards to his presentation of a

²⁸⁸ Indick, William. *Psycho Thrillers: Cinematic Explorations of the Mysteries of the Mind*. London: McFarland and Co, 2006. Tudor, Andrew. *Monsters and Mad Scientists: a Cultural History of the Horror Movie*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

²⁸⁹ Alfred Hitchcock. Interview by Frank S. Nugent. *New York Times*, 3rd November, 1946, Sunday Magazine Section. 12-13, 63-64. *Alfred Hitchcock Interviews*. Ed. Sidney Gottlieb. Jackson: University of Mississippi, 2003. p.21

character's unconscious on film. It was not within the scope of this project to examine the culture or lack of culture of psychoanalysis in Poland during the time of Kieślowski's career. The research undertaken for this thesis gave no indication to there being a community of psychoanalysts in Poland during that time. However, this is not to say that such a culture did not exist. The lack of reference to it in comparison to its occurrence in the research on Buñuel and Hitchcock however is likely to indicate that its influence on Kieślowski was minimal. A further examination of the history of psychoanalysis in Poland would be a useful undertaking in order to discover its significance or otherwise as an influencing factor on public opinion at the time.

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